OF THE *Conſcience.*

A DISCOVRSE wherein is playnely declared, the vnſpeakeable ioye, and comfort of a good Conſcience, and the intollerable griefe and diſcomfort of an euill Conſcience.

MADE BY IOHN Woolton, Miniſter of the Goſpell.

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BOUND BY E. REDFORD

TO THE RIGHT worshipfull, Sir Iohn Fylbert,

Knight, Iohn Woolton wisheth prosperous successe in all worldly affaires: and in the life to come, immortall felicity.

AMONG MAny worthy and deuine lessons, which Seneca gaue vnto Lucilius, touching the leadyng of an honest and godlye lyfe: he borrowyth one of the Epicure, in mine opinion not to be accounted the meanest, which he would haue his friende to imprint diligently and deepely in the bottome of his brest: Let vs so lyue (sayth he) as if the eyes of all men were bent toward vs: let vs so studie and deuise with our selues when we are alone, as if straungers did viewe our secret cogitations. Manye faultes and mischiefes shalt thou auoyd if thou imagine that thou hast a witnes of thy doings alway at thy elbowe. Which lesson euery christian ought to learne, not Seneca lib. 10. epist. 11.

Our actions and deeds alwayes viewed.

imagining (as Seneca would haue vs) that Cato, Lelius, or some such graue man, doe alwayes with open eyes looke vppon vs: but perswading our selues as the truth is in deede, that we haue with vs alwayes present, waking & watching vs, a sage and graue Censor of lyfe & maners (our conscience I say) which according to the cõmon prouerbe, is in steede of a thousand witnesses. This conscience so wonderfully framed and fashioned in man by almighty God, to be a witnesse & an informer of mankinde, and of the law of Nature, which commandeth things that be honest, & forbiddeth the contrary. Sommoneth vs as it were before the tribunall seate of God, sometime accusing, sometime excusing, nowe punishing and now absoluing vs, for God did of his good will and vpright iustice ordeyne this watchman in our Nature, that ioy should follow lawdable and honest actions: and contrariwise Sorrow, abhominable and desperate deedes: that anguish and dolour might be a continuall tormenter of vngodlinesse, and a destroyer of rebellious natures. There can nothing happẽ to a mortall man more grieuous, heauy, or miserable thẽ a guilty Conscience, which all those

The Conscience in steede of a thousande witnesses.

Mans conscience is a schoolemaister vnto him.

The detestation of a corrupt Conscience.

those ỹ are delighted with the filthinesse of sin, are compelled to carry about with thē, as a booke of notes, wherein they write all their offences. Whereof Bernhard speaketh after this manner, An euill Conscience is a witnesse of our debtes, a Iudge, a tormenter, she accuseth vs, she iudgeth vs, she punisheth vs, and she condemneth vs, which if it lie hid for a time, yet it breaketh out at the last, especially at the hower of death, and giueth a thousande euidences againste men. Whereof Iulian the Apostata, Henrie king of Fraunce, Iames Latomus of Louayne, and dyuers others, are euident & knowne examples, who felt these fearefull anguishes of the Conscience, and the sence of Gods wrath for their wilfull obstinacie, and cruell tirranny against Christ and hys church, and at their departure out of this worlde, with dolefull voyces, and fearefull exclamacions vttered in their griefe, to such as had accesse vnto them.

Chrisost in psal. 50.

Bernhardus.

The desperate ende of men rowing wilfully against their Conscience.

Pantalion chron. rerum memorabilium. Iho. Foxius et alij.

The good conscience on the other side as it were a brasen wall, against vntrue reportes, perill and daungers, and maketh the godly, when they are persecuted, beaten and tyed in yron chaynes, voyde of dolor and payne; and when they come before the

Herat. lib. 1. epist.

mightie

mightie men of this worlde, they shrinke not, they faynte not, they ware not pale, neyther chaunge their countenance. Paule being a prisoner and brought before Felix: was not abashed hymselfe, but with hys aunsweres, which were full of diuine power and might, he made the gouernour to tremble and quake: which cannot be ascribed to any thing, but to ỳ sincere good conscience of his wherof himself speaketh thus.

Act. 24. Herein I endeuored my selfe to haue alway a cleare Conscience toward God, and toward men. Let vs then beware that we wounde not our Conscience, and whether we be alone at home, or in company abroad, let vs accoumpt that the principall witnes: For as S. Ambrose sayth: Euery man hath of his own minde & Conscience a seuere iudge, either punishing the guilty, or acquiting the guiltles and innocent: And Seneca writeth to Lucillius diuinely after this manner. To what end doe we hide our selues, and decline the eyes, & eares of mē: A good cōscience calleth the company vnto hym, but an euel conscience is in doubt and feare, euen, when we are alone. If those thinges that we doe be honest, what need we to care if the whole world looke vpon vs: but if they be vnhoneste, wee must

Ambrosius in epist ad Constant.

Seneca epist. 96.

must needes knowe them our selues, O miserable men that we are, if we contemne this witnesse. Seing then that so great ioye and comfort issueth out of a good conscience, & so great heuines and discomfort cõmeth from an euell Conscience, I haue thought good to write somewhat briefly and shortly, as wel of the one as of ỳ other. Neither was it my purpose to prosecute all things, that belong vnto this matter (which to doe would require more leisure thẽ I yet haue, & a lõger worck then this treatise) and who so list to reade more hereof, I referre him to Saynt Bernhard, Melancthon, Hemingius, and especially to Ioh. Riuius, who wil plentifully satisfie the grædy Reader, desirous to vnderstand more of this matter: but I haue collected out of all these, so much as sæmed vnto me most conuenient and necessary for the Christian reader in this behalf. Which if I haue not accomplished so pithely and eloquently as perhaps some of our English Philosophers or Retoricians would haue done, I wil not contend in rendring a reason of my doings: but do giue them leaue to amend that which is amisse, for as Cinicall taracion is detestable, so is charitable animaduersion in my iudgement cõmendable,

not

not misdoubting but that the godly reader will rather accept hereof with like affection as it is deliuered: then disdain my want of ability to offer it so perfite in all poynts, eyther as the matter deserueth, or I my selfe desired.

These my Labeures (such as they be) I offer vnto your worshipp, as a token of my good will, and obseruancy toward the same, for your great loue and intire affection toward me: which you haue diuers and sundry ways, in benefites bestowed vpon me, and mine, effectually declared. And bicause I certaynly know that in your life & dayly actions, you doe not any thing willingly against the testimony of a good Conscience, which you only ground vpon Gods word, the surest foundation in all your building, and clearest lighte and lanterne to directe your paths to euerlasting life. This treaty of the same matter cannot be vnmeete to be presented vnto you: which your worshipp according to your good nature, will I trust accept in good part: the liuing God blesse and preserue you, and that vertuous Lady your wife, long in al prosperity. From Exceter the 20. of Marche.

Your Worshipps humbly to command. Iohn Woolton.

OF THE CONSCIENCE.

a Treatise collected by Iohn Woolton.

THERE ARE TWO principall partes of mans Soule (as I haue plainely declared in my Treatise of the immortalitie thereof) which of necessitie muste concurre in all executions and actions of vertue. For although the nature of the Soule be simple and without composition and deuision, yet they vse to attribute vnto him certaine partes: so witte according to hys sundry and diuers operations. As for example sake, we acknowledge in the fyre two powers or qualities: the one burning or heating, the other shewing or discouering from darkenesse all thinges: euen so when men speake of the partes of the Soule, they vsurpe that name for the functions and effectes of the same. These two partes are called Reason and Wyll: whereof the first sheweth what is seemely and conuenient to be done, or to be left vndone: and the seconde either coueteth and pursueth as good, that which was proposed by

After what sorte there are two partes of mannes Soule.

Reason.

Will.

reason, eyther elſe declineth and auoydeth the ſame as euell. Hereof came that apte and fine ſentence. All mortal actions, are as it were ingendred and conceiued by Reaſon, but are broughte foorth, and deliuered by Wyll.

Brute beaſtes haue neyther Reaſon nor Wyll but ſenſe & Appetite.

Now as brute beaſtes haue no ſparke of reaſon, (whereby man both diſcerneth moſt farre from them, and reſembleth very neere an expreſſe Image of the diuine nature) ſo haue they no Will, but Senſe and Appetite, and with the one, they are leade to their naturall foode, with the other they diſcerne thinges hollſome, from hurtfull. Some there are, that terme this Appetite in brute beaſtes Will without Reaſon: for that domme creatures voyd of minde, and vnderſtanding, are leadde toward thinges with a certain ſecrete motion, and inſtinct of nature, rather then with any free will, choyſe, or vnderſtanding. For they in ſtoode of Reaſon, haue giuen vnto them by God, a certaine naturall ſkill, to defend and to ſerue them ſelues. This Will or Appetite which perſeweth thinges conceiued by Sence, is common to man with beaſtes: euen as the Sences, as well externall as inter-

internall, (from whence this Appetite ysseweth) is imparted equally to man and beast, saving to the sence of all brute beasts commonly is more quick and perfite, then that which is in man, and in beastes this sence is the supreme and most excellent facultie. In man it is but a seruaunte, or handmayde to Intelligence, or vnderstanding.

And Reason was geuen vnto man, not onely to searche after vertue, that the Will should embrace the same, but to moderate carnall motions, and to bridle their rage, and furies. Albeit Reason very often, as it were shadowed and ouertaike with darcknesse, iudgeth peruerstly and corruptly: and not that alone, but also is so infirme and weake, that it cannot restrayne euill desires, nor quench the flames of filthy lusts, finally when Reason hath with himself determined any thinge, Will is either so ouerthwart, or else so weake, that she doeth not execute the same. Whereof may ryse no small question, seeing that the very obiect of Will is vertue her selfe, shewed and opened vnto her by Reason, howe it commeth to passe that we are caried headlong,

The effecte of Reason.

The effecte

as it were violently to mischiefe, so that pernitious and deuilishe affections, doe ouerrule that excelent faculty giuen by God to couet that which is good & honest, whereof the Apostle himselfe complayneth. That good thing which I woulde doe, that I doe not: and that euill which I would not, that I doe.

And Medea burning in madde loue with Iason: hauing wrastled with hir self much and long, yet coulde she not ouercome that furor with Reason, for thus shee talketh with hir selfe.

Video meliora proboq; deteriora sequor.

But the scripture resolueth this doubt, and telleth vs that through the fall of our first parentes, and by originall sinne descending into all mankind from that roote: these diseases of the minde, these swarmes of perturbations, and these continuall conflictes betweene reason and lust doe budde out and spring. Therfore great neede haue we to craue Gods ayde & helpe: by whose grace we maye vanquishe and ouercome that rebellion of desires and affections: for without that neyther Reason nor Will is of power eyther to doe good, or else to resist,

Why will is why lo by diffe go Reason

the

the crooked and frowarde mocions of man.

In the chiefe and principall parte of the Soule which we call Reason, they commonly place the Conscience, that wonderfull workmanship of God, being according to the prouerbe in stede of a thousand witnesses, not onely commaunding things honest and diswading the contrary, but moreouer alciting vs as it were before the Tribunall seate of the diuine Maiestie, sometime accusing and someting excusing. In this matter punishing and another acquytting. Whereof as I minde to write somewhat at this time: so will I not follow the subtyle and thornye maner of the Schoolemen, who with great curiositie of definitions and deuisions, haue altogether darkened rather then lightened this matter: but so farre forth as my abilitie will extende, doe purpose with breuitie and perspicutie, to prosecute this matter. Whereunto if I cannot reach, according to my earnest desire, yet I trust at the least hereby to moue some happy witte to polish this enterprise, for it were greate pitty that comfortable Conscience should be any longer mute and domme as a straunger: but that shee might

The Conscience in respect of Iudgement is placed in the minde but in respect of affections & motions it is in the hart.

The operation of the Conscience

frankly and freely speake vnto our country men in our English tongue.

The Methode of this Worke and the diuision thereof.

And that I maye keepe some certayne methode in the translation hereof, which they call Analysis seemeth most conuenient for me to follow. First I will put downe the definition, comprehending and infolding as it were in one bundell, the whole matter generally. Then I will open and resolue into partes, euery portion of the same. In the which Analysis, besides sundry and diuers things, a man may easely see the principles and groundes of the Conscience, howe she is placed in the minde: hir force and power in examining all morall actions. This done I will speake of the difference betweene a sounde, and a corrupt Conscience, and of the effects of them both: to wyt, of the solace & comfort of the one in aduersitie, and of the priuie woundes of the other euen in worldly felicitie. Lastly, I will discourse certaine questions incident to this matter: which being finished, I trust that the knowledge of Conscience, which hath bene secret and obscure, shall shewe hir selfe somewhat plainely to the eyes, and shall stirre vp in men a marueylous

lous loue and desire of a sincere conscience.

The Apostle in that golden and excellent Epistle to the Romaines speaketh of the Gentils in this wise. For when the Gentils which haue no lawe, doe by nature the things conteyned in the lawe, they hauing not the lawe, are a lawe vnto themselues. Which shewe the effect of the lawe, written in their hartes, their conscience also bearing witnesse, and their thoughtes accusing one another or excusing. In this sentence of saint Paule I obserue foure thinges, firste he sayth that the worck of the law is written in their hartes: this worck of the lawe, is the discerning betweene thinges honest, and vnhonest: Secondly he sayth y they shew it. For in maintayning of Religion, they acknowledge that there is a God to be worshipped: and in that they punish crimes and heynous offences, they professe themselues defendors of honesty, and Iustice. Thirdly he maketh mētion of the inward testimony of the conscience. Fourthly he sheweth what manner of Testes the Conscience is: euen by eudent Arguments accusing or excusing, out of the which this definitiō is deduced. The Conscience is a certaine

A testimony expressing Conscience

Rom. 2.

The defynition of the Conscience.

taine naturall intelligence of the law, ingrafted in the minde or power vnderstanding, whereby we allow good actions and disalow euill actions. Which iudgement planted in the internall man by God, breedeth in the execution of vertue, a quietnesse and reste of minde, and in vice a wonderfull veration of the same, punishing and afflicting the man guilty: but there are three thinges in the minde, which are to be obserued for the better vnderstanding of this matter.

Three thinges in ỳ minde to be obserued.

Vnderstanding contemplatyue.

The firste is the vnderstanding whiche they call contemplatyue, busied alwayes in the study and searching out of thinges, and this is that better part of the minde which alway (as the Philosophers saye) aspireth to the beste. In this they place Synderesis which is the keper and conserver of notices, or vnderstandinges, which are breede with vs by nature, examining what is, and what is not expedient. And therefore it is sayde that she ministreth propositions to reasons and argumentes, which are called Sillogismes practical, Such propositions are these that follow, honest thinges are to bee done, vnhonest thinges are not to be done: Out of which two grounds or principles infinite

Aristo. li. 1. ethick.

infinite singuler propositions are derived, seruing in arguments, or as I called them Sillogismes practicall. And it is so called for that it examineth and inquireth a reason out of the law of nature, of the quality of all humaine actions.

Sinteresis est habitus innatus cõ seruans principia moralia et practica sicut Synesis conseruat principia speculabilia.

In the second place of the minde is Intelligence practicall, which consisteth in action. And therin is the Conscience properly placed, for that of the difference of Actions, she putteth down and as it were deliuereth the lesse proposition or assumtion in the Sillogisme or Argument in this wise, Sinteresis or Vnderstanding ministreth this proposition in Hector. Honest things are to be done. Then Conscience apprehendeth this assumtion. To defend a mans countrie and to die therefore is honest. Against Sinteresis or Vnderstanding deliuereth this proposition in Oedipus. Filthy and detestable deedes are to be eschewed. Then the Conscience assumeth. But Incest with my mother and paricide, are moste detestable deedes. And so vnderstanding and Conscience reasoneth in all other actions.

Iudgement or determination.

Thirdly in the minde there is Iudgement, pronouncing of all actions, whether they

they be worthy of prayse or dispraysе. And as she serued in generality in the Maior or first proposition, so as a witty Iudge, she descendeth vnto the special case in the conclusion and geueth sentence. For examples sake, Intelligence contemplatiue in Hector, deliuereth this proposition. Honest deedes are praise worthy. The the Conscience subsumeth: To defend my countrie and to dye in defense of it, is an honest dede, lastly iudgment geueth sentence, Therfore to defend my country, and to die in defence of it, is prayse worthy. Agayne Intelligence deliuereth this proposition to Oedipus. Moste vile and filthy actes deserue moste greuouse punishmentes. Conscience addeth: Incest with my Mother and paricide, are most vile and filthy actes. Finally Iudgement geueth sentence: Therefore incest with my Mother and paricide, deserue most greeuous punishmentes. The former argument breddc in Hectors brest vnspeakeable courage, in so much that he vtterly contemned death. For Polidamas, did aduise him not to goe out among the Grecians that day: because the flying of Birdes did portend some heauy euent. Hector aunswered stoutely, whether

Examples plainely expressing this matter.

whether the byrdes flye on the right hande towarde the East, or on the left hande towarde the Weste, I am resolued to obey great Iupiter his counsayle: meaning that valyant mocion of his minde to be Iupiters counsayle, whereby he was excyted to doe noble and valyant dædes. Neyther could superstitious obseruacion of tymes, withholde him from doing his duetie, especially in the common perill of his naturall countrye. Contrariwise the latter Sillogisme kyndled such tormenting & burning fyres, that through impaciencie & inwarde griefe for wickednesse by him committed, he rent out his owne eyes. Oedipus verily was a noble fellowe and king of the Thebanes, who albeit he contemned Tiresias the Prophet, casting in his téethe incestious mariage, yet in ẏ end he was so cõuerted with one testimonie of his owne conscience, that he confessed himselfe guyltie and a cast away, not worthie to beholde any longer the light of Heauen, and euen so Iocasta hys mother with an halter strangled hir selfe. Oedipus.

There are infinite such examples of Sylogismes, or argumentes practicall in holy scripture. Ezechias knoweth that there

is but one true God, whoe onely is to be called vpon and worshipped, which thing Synteresis or Intelligence telleth him out of the first cõmaundement: Then Conscience aduoucheth the same: & last of all iudgement concludeth in this maner. The true & lyuing God, euẽ the God of Israell is only to be worshiped: But Idolatrie maintayneth manye Gods, euen in despite of the lyuing God, therefore Idolatrie is to be abolished, Ezechias armed wyth thys iudgement of Conscience, cutteth downe the Groues, taketh downe the brasen Serpent, ouerthroweth Idols, and abolisheth Idolatry, and committeth the euent to God. And sayth: For these are no Gods but woode and stone, euen the worke of mens hande. And in lyke maner Dauid stayeth his hande from slaying of Saule, euen offered vnto hym in the Caue, bicause he knoweth that he is Gods annoynted, and a magistrate by his ordinance, reasoning thus with himselfe. No violence is to bee vsed towarde Gods magistrate: But Saule is Gods magistrate, therfore I must doe him no violence. Examples also are worthy consideration, as Regulus led euẽ wtth ciuill honesty kæpeth promise

The grounde of Ezechias his conscience.

Dauid. 1. Sa. 24.

promise made vnto his enimy, reasoning thus with himselfe: There is nothing more seemely for a noble hart, then to consider the end of his accions, and his owne honesty: But to keepe my oath made vnto my ennemie is the end of my accions, and apperteineth to my honestie, therefore I will keepe my oth made vnto my ennemie, euen in the perill of my life. Such like examples are in deliberations, counsayles and examples in all histories of the actes and deedes of mortall men.

I am not ignorant that some handle this matter otherwise, deuiding Reason into two partes. The Superiour and the inferioure Reason. And that would haue that light of mans minde prescribing thinges deuine and eternall, to be the higher Reason: and that which is busied about temporall and profitable thinges to be the inferiour. Moreouer some there be also that affirme that the Conscience, putteth downe the Minor proposition, and cõclusion. And touching the diuision of Reason, they vse such examples as follow. Imagin Cæsar deliberating with himselfe, whether hee shoulde take Armoure agaynste his natiue

Riuius. lib.1.de conscientia: & hausit ex Augustino.

Riuius lib. de consc. dissentit ab

omnibus ait enim conscientiam ponere complectionē in Syllogismo practico.

country. Conscience aunswereth that hee ought not to doe it. Reason Superiour confirmeth it, because it is contrary to Godlynesse, and to the law of nature, being in it selfe vile and vnhonest: Reason Inferioure, allloweth the same because it is in ỹ world a thing infamous and reprochful, and therwithall very perilous. Out of these Sinteresis or Judgement inferreth: that it is abhominable & by no meanes to be attempted. In lyke maner imagine Popilius delyberating with himselfe whether he might execute Antonies commaundement & murder Cicero. Conscience telleth that he ought not to murder Cicero by any meanes. Reason Superior sayth, that he shall be noted of great ingratitude, if he murder that man who sometime defended him in a matter of lyfe and death, & procured his delyuerance. Reason Inferior addeth that he shal procure comunon hatred & mallice of all good men, if he murder a man that hath most notably preserued the liberty of his country, wherof Sinteresis or Judgement gathereth, that Ingratitude as a most odious & detestable thing is to be auoyded. And thus you see all the partes of a Sillogisme which they call practick:

practick: wherin reason probable examine morall actions by the law of Nature & by principles deryued out of the same. I call Principles those Notices or knowledge which are planted & graued in our minds by good sentences cõmon & knowne vnto al men, wherevnto we without gainesaying doe wyllingly and naturally assent. Such are these. Thankes are to be yeelded to those which deserue them. Euerie man ought to haue his owne. Wee ought to imitate no man. And these principles which appertayne to our duetie and vocation in a ciuill lyfe are named practicke, & their naturall habite Sinterisis. But those Theorick principles which properly belong to contemplation & knowledge, they terme the Intelligence of principles, as for example. The whole is greater then a part. Of nothing can nothing be made, & such lyke. I thought it requisite to interlace this short admonition of the termes or wordes, which wryters in these cases vse: whereof many curious questions are of many moued, which may be the better discerned, these things knowne for my part, I thinke the first diuision to be most commodious and playne

for

for knowledge and vnderstanding sake, otherwise most certayne it is that these thinges differ not in mans minde, if you respect their substance and essence: being in deede mingled & confused one with anosther: onely for instruction sake, they are seperate in thought and cogitation. For the heauenly Philosopher S. Paule nameth the whole Sillogisme, whereof I haue spoken before, mans conscience.

Causes why diuers men be of diuerse Cõsciences.

It is euidente by the premisses that the quality of Conscience varieth, according to the condition of mens factes. For in mẽ that feare and loue GOD, there is a good Conscience, whiche procedeth of vertues and sincere deliberations, and deedes bringing vnto man an incredible ioye & pleasure of thinges well done: And an euell Conscience, in wicked and euell persons which by reason of vile and abhominable facts, of shame and discredite receiued, doth fret & knaw the minde with great vntollerable griefes and traunces.

Wherein it is to be noted, that Conscience taketh not these differences of ỹ facultye Iudicatiue which is a naturall gifte, & therefore to be nombred among good things and

and is sometime named the lighte of the minde, sometime the naturall bodie, sometime the instruction of Reason: But the Conscience taketh suche qualities of these three thinges: Of the facts paste, of the present affection of the hart, and of the euet following. For if the minde be throughly perswaded of his Innocency, it reioyceth, and cherisheth good hope, and is called a good Conscience the diffynition whereof is as followeth.

The thinges which Conscience takes in respecteth.

A good Conscience is a ioyfull remembraunce of our former life, well paste and spente, hauing a sure hope and expectation of some happy euent: Or thus, a good Conscience is a gladsome motion of the harte conioyned with a perfite knowledge of a fact well done, where it is called not Science but Conscience. Which good Conscience is aswell the cause of chearefulnesse in the face and countinaunce, being but an outward token of the inward affection: as also the breder and conserue of the solace and ioye in the minde conceaued of good factes and happy euents. For better declaration hereof I will examine certayne cases particularly.

Diffynytyons of the good Conscience.

And for examples sake let vs looke vppon these rich men of the world, hauing at their own will abundantly thinges necessary to a sweete and pleasaunt life, and therefore are generally almoste reputed blessed and happy. If a man with more insight examin their estate, he shall not finde any men either more miserable, or more trembling & fearing Gods wrath and vengeaunce, then they if at any time they happen to call an accoumpt of them selues, by what meanes they haue heaped these thinges together. I doe not nowe speake of such as haue gotten riches and increased their substance without any mans iniurie, if any such be (for in deede such byrdes are rarely seene:) But I note those that wythout respect of right or wrong, doe onely or chiefely seeke for gaine, neglecting in the meane season those things which principally doe adorne and bewtifie man. Whiles such men doe recorde their gouen and frawde in gathering gayne: what agonies and passions of minde: what gnawings and wounders of Conscience doe they abide: wher with they being as it were scourged and whypte, doe sustayne inwardly vnspeakeable misery

in

in their eternall shewe of felicitie. On the other side they that with honest and lawful meane growe to be ritche, and haue vsed no collusion nor hurtful guile in their trade of lyfe, must nedes inwardly reioyce, and giue endelesse praise and thankes to the almightie for his goodnesse & mercie towarde them. Moreouer, those men that excell in bewtie, strength, health, or other giftes of the body, must nedes be sayde to haue receyued great benfites of God, but those that abuse their bewtie to vnchaste loue, their strength to hurt their neighbor, their health to filthie and vnlawfull pleasures, what miseries and sorrowes shall they afterwarde susteyne. We maye iudge the same of Nobilitie, of power, of glorie, of honor and such lyke. For if onely vertue be the true and perfite Nobilitie (as the Poet sayeth:) Then surely they may not rightly be called Noble, that onely descend of a famous house, and haue gotten Armes and Nobilitie by their renowmed Auncestors, that is with other mens vertues: or else (as often it happeneth) by our notorious Pyracies, robbries, or murders: but those onely that with their owne worthye

Of bewtie and strength

Of Nobilitie

and excellent deedes haue aduaunced themselues, or being sprong of Noble parentage by imitation, doe withall their endeuour, study to resemble them from whence they came. Such the as are Noble in deede, doe conceiue of their excellent and worthy deedes towarde their countrie an vnspeakable ioy in their Conscience: whereas the Noble vnnoble with his guyltie conscience (howsoeuer men fawne vpon him or flatter him) is inwardly vexed & tormented.

The abuse of power & auctority.

And whereas that is a right power and good dominion, to haue many whose welth and prosperity a man may tender and consider, whose liberties & lawes a man maye defende and conserue: they that doe otherwise, must needes haue deepe griefes, and perillous woundes in their mindes. The example of auncient Tyrauntes in all hystories verifie the same: as Dionisius, Phalaris, Nero, and manye moe innumerable. Whose great and manyfolde miseries that I may omitte, which haue vexed them day and night, by meanes of their monstrous deedes, yet I note this one thing very worthy obseruation, that such excellent & worthy wightes as haue deserued the loue of all

all men: these Tyrauntes haue not onely alwayes feared and hated: but also haue banished or expelled out of their compaynyes, yea and sometime haue put them to death, and the stowte & valyant men they hate, lest they should attempt with force to bryde their crueltie: the wise men: least they should moderate their rashnesse and impotencie: the iust men, lest the multitude shoulde be ledde away through admiration of their vertues. Well sayd Salust, Kings & Tyrants doe alwayes more suspect good men then badde, and other mens vertues are terrible vnto them. Remouing therfore from them such men, whose vertues their naughtie mindes detest and abhorre, they conioyne with Cutthroates and Ruffynes, and commit bothe themselues and their subiectes to their Regimentes. And yet hereby can they not exclude feare, for they alwayes mistrust their garde and other keepers of their bodye, and thinke that the edge of the swoorde is alwayes euen at their neckes. Dionisius doing is often mentioned, who hangyng a sharpe poynted swoorde by the heire of a horsetaile ouer his friendes heade: playnely payntith out the

inwarde conſcience and outwarde lyfe of Tyrantes.

The ſame Denys as Tully writeth ſhonned the company and ſocietie of men: and ledde his lyfe with Fugitiues, Ruffyans, and Barbarous people, and reputed al ſuch for his enimies, in whome there appeared any ſhewe of vertue and honeſtie. But cõtrariwiſe thoſe Princes that ſæke to maintaine the welth of their ſubiects, that yælde vnto them lawfull and nædefull liberties: that thinke with themſelues the proper dutye and part of a Prince, not to conſiſt in precious garments, nor delicious banquets and vayne pleaſures, not in great heapes of Gold and Siluer: But in pietie, vertue, and prudencie: Such Princes I ſaye will not haue neyther of their counſayle, neyther of their Court, ryotous Bankeruptes and Ruffyans, but will be aſſiſted with ſuch who bend all their ſtudies for the proſperitie of their countrie: and will content himſelfe onely wyth the friendſhyp and familiaritie of good men.

True glorie

True glorie is much accounted of, and not without cauſe. It is a Renowmed fame for ſome notable and excellent deede done:

hauing

hauing annexed vnto it the loue and reuerence of good men. But I praye you what pleasure can those conceyue hereof, who being altogether voide of vertue & honesty, haue eyther by some mischiefe gotten them fame amongst the multitude: eyther by vsurie, extorcion & oppression of the powre, are become notable? assuredly such men to heare their owne conscience tell them another tale: and in continuance of tyme that vayne perswasion lyke smoke vanisheth awaye. Contrariwise, these that by their owne demerits are magnified and aduanced to true honor and glorie by good men: must needs enioy vnspeakable solaces and pleasures in their myndes: and do account the same a sufficient reward for all their trauayles and aduentures.

So Pompeius Magnus, when the people did salute hym, calling hym the father of their countrie, acknowledged that he had receyued that daye a most ample & worthy reward for all those labeures which he had susteyned for his country. Therfore welth, Riches, Powre, Glory, Honour, strength, helth, and such like, whereby the mad multitude measureth mannes felicity cannot bring

bring vnto man any stable or firm comfort vnlesse they haue annexed vnto them the testimony of a sincere Conscience, for that pleasure is not durable, which ariseth of incontinency, of ambition, of auarice, of intemperancy, and of others of that Rable.

All these certeynlye are deceiueable and spotted repasties. Moste truely is it sayde, The feare of the Lorde delighteth the harte, and giueth ioy and gladnesse continualy. But the vngodly haue no ioy at all. Thus they that leade a godly and honest life, albeit they contemne or haue not these sensuall delectations, and doe not follow Venus court neither haunt delicate fare, nor esteeme daunsing, wanton playing, and other vanities, yet no doubte they liue in greater myrth, and ioye then those carnall men: Who what with the furors of theyr Conscience, the remembraunce of Gods wrath and malediction hanging ouer theyr head, and the continuall feare of the greate daye of doome, doe leade a wretched and miserable life.

Aduersity and misery so greeuous to this our nature is it not mitigated and made more easy by reason of a good Conscience: That

What saying is no more cõmon then true. It is the greatest solace to wante Guylt. Agayne. It is no smale thing to be innocent in aduersitie.

And euen so it fareth in matters of Regiment, wherein if happily at anye tyme there happen ouerthwart euentes to myne good consultations: or when good actions are sinisterly interpreted by euill men: what other consolation doth so effectually diminish griefes & sorrowes of the minde, as an vpright Conscience. Which thing you maye euidently se by reading the Romayne hystories in Furius Camillus, Scipio Africanus and many others, who salued the deepe woundes of exyle and banishment, and the ingratitude of their Citizens, with the certaine knowledge and remembrance of their valyaunt actes in defence of their Countrie. Socrates vniustlye condemned, spake so demurely (as Cicero recordeth) euẽ when he shoulde supp vp the deadly poyson: that he seemed not to descend into hell, but to ascende into heauen. Aepaminõdas stricken into the brest with an arrowe fighting in defence of his countrie, & throughe faintnesse inforced to lye downe in his Pa-

uilion, woulde not suffer the arrowe to be plucked out, before he might knowe the euent of the battayle: And at last when tydinges was brought him of the flight and conquest ouer his enimies, he then at the last willed the arrowe to be drawne out: and pouring out his heart blonde, he dyed myldely, gratulating so happy successe vnto his countrie. The holy scripture proposeth vnto vs store of such examples: and specially Iob pressed with so great calamity, and almost swallowed vp with miseries: when his childrē were gone: his wife raging and rayling, and his friends in stede of honye, gaue vnto hym talke as bitter as Gall. What lenitiue had he but a good conscience, borne vp with a strong fayth, whereby he cried saying: Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him still, and albeit his frendes so tould him that he was forsaken of God, yet he held faste by the Ancker of Gods prouydence.

Iob. 19.

I know (sayth he) that my redeemer liueth, and that I shall rise agayne at the last day, and shalbe compassed agayn with my skinne, and shall see god in my flesh. Ioseph that Godly and chaste young man, being chayned in

the

the stockes, what solace had hee in the deepe dungeon, but his sincere mind and vnspotted Conscience: And euen so it was with Eliazarus, with Paule, and with all the Apostles in their distresse, for Eliazarus sayth O lord I am piteously tormented in my body, but I willingly suffer all these thinges for thy names sake, Paule being certified by Agabus, of the afflictions which he should suffer at Ierusalem, I (sayth he) am ready not only to be bound, but also to suffer death for the name of the Lord Iesus. The Apostles likewise being scourged for preaching the Gospel, Went away with ioy, for that they were found worthy to beare infamy for the name of the Lord Iesus.

The principal cause of these thinges was doubtlesse a good conscience, which turneth sorrowe into ioy, calamity to felicity, and to conclude, death into lyfe it selfe.

rupt Conscience.

AS THERE IS IN GOD that supreme and high maiestie of God, a wisedome descerning betwyne good & euil thinges: and also a will wishing goodnesse, with a deuine delectation & pleasure: & contrariwise nylling that which is naught, and with great indignation and anger reiecting and punishing the same. Euen so hath he created the lyfe of man: that there shoulde be certaine lawes as it were notices or admonitions of the mind, commaunding thinges honest, and forbidding the contrary, besides these he hath appointed magistrats that they should defend the good, and punishe the euill. And to this ende were thinges thus ordered and disposed in the creation: that men might learne that there is both a God, being a wise and iust Iudge: and therewithall that manne shoulde knowe and perceyue himselfe to be the ymage of God: whome he ought to imitate and followe. For God is neyther knowne of heauen nor of earth: of plants:

neyther yet of beastes, although they obey him in theire kinde, but Aungelles and men onely hath he so created, that he might be obeyed, knowne & worshipped of them, and that they being fashioned lyke vnto God: might not pyne away and dye wyth impietie and deration of minde: but hauing their hartes agreeable to right reason and iudgement, might reioyce in good actions as well before as after the facte.

But in this corrupt and wounded nature, mans hart burneth as it were wyth flames, meere contrary to right iudgement and at the first trembleth not to runne into mischiefe. Nowe for that it concerneth Gods iustice to punishe and route out obstinate and rebellious natures; therefore hath he conioyned the dolor and anguishe of the Conscience, following wicked and mischeuous dedes, that might (as it were an hangman) punishe and execute offenders. And although this sorrowe be somewhat dull nowe and then in persons, yet at the last, God doth so kindle it in the wicked, that they tremble and quake, and are oppressed (as it were) with the noyse of the thunder as it is sayde in the Psalme. In

thy anger thou ſhalt vexe and trouble them. Wherof Plato wryteth excellently in this wiſe. When an euill man draweth towarde his ende, he is ſodainely ſtriken with a feare and care of ſuch thinges, as he once thought not of before: and thoſe talke of Deuils of Hell: and of paynes which the wicked ſuffer there, whereof he made a ſcoffe and ſtale ieſt, doe then miſerablye encoumber his minde, wherby he faleth into an examination of his former life. And recording his vile and filthy actes: hee is quyet neyther waking nor ſleeping: & often times he ſtarteth in his ſleepe, as it were a fearefull childe out of his dreame, and ſo lyuing awhyle, he droupeth away, in euill hope.

Plato primo de repub.

Sophocles wryteth, that Oedipus beyng olde and blynde, was ledde to Athens by his daughter Antigona. Who dying there, was buried in the Temple of Erinnyus. By the which fable he ſignifieth the vnquiet Conſcience at the howre of death of all ſuch as haue ledde an vnhoneſt lyfe. For Erinnyus by interpretatiõ are nothing elſe then contentious perturbations of the minde, by reaſon of an euill Conſcience, which alwayes wayte vpon vnhoneſt actes

Sophocles.

Oedipus.

Erinnius.

and

and deedes. And they are sayd to be mindefull, for that condigne punishment, for sinfull actes are neuer forgotten, whiche although they be for a time prolonged, yet this is the very property and effect of Erinnius that when mischiefe and payne is least looked for, then it falleth moste greuously. Thus much I thought good to note touching the occasions of dolours, and greefe in the euell conscience, now lette vs consider the difinition of the same.

The diffinition of an euel Conscience.

An euell Conscience is a heauy and vexing motion of the hart, conioyned with perfect knowlege of a detestable fact. For assuredly furies doe alwayes pursue and chase the wicked, not with burning torches and firebrandes, as interludes and playes sette out, but with horrors of Conscience, and anguish of minde, awayting alwayes vpon mischieuous men, euen as the shadowe followeth the body, not suffering them to breath and as it were to pause one moniente from trembling and feare. And for this cause onely Seneca commendeth that saying of the Epicure: The gilty man may happily hide himselfe sometime, but he hath no assured confidence to escape. Whiche

thinges

thinges as they are true, so are they confirmed with Histories throughoute all tymes and ages. Tacitus reporteth that Tiberius vexed with such tormentes, wrote vnto the Senate in this wise. What should I write vnto you my Lordes, or how should I write, or rather what should I not write, at this instant. All the Gods of heauen at once rather destroy me then to pine away dayly thus as I doe. Such plagues and tormentes had Tiberius inwardly by his monstrous doinges, Further is that some the purpose which a certayne man vttered, If the wicket of Tiberius minds might be vnlocked, a man should easily see their mangled wounds, for as it fareth with the body by reason of stripes, and blowes, euen so is the minde all to rente and torne with cruelty, filthy lust, fraude malice, and such like. For albeit Tiberius had no want of anye worldly thinges, that might serue to solace and comfort an afflicted mind, yet was he not able by any meanes to ease or consuage the tormentes and paynes of his Conscience. Suetonius writeth of Caligula, who seemed neyther to care for God nor man, yet at y least roumbling and glauncing of thundering and lightning,

Tiberius.

Caligula.

lightning, he would winke and couer hys face: & when with greater terror heauen and earth seemed both to shake & to burne with fire, he would runne into corners and hyde himselfe. The same Author also noteth howe Nero, after he had murdered his naturall mother, was so grieuously vexed in conscience, that he could not be cõforted, neyther with ioyfull shoutes and acclamations of the people, nor with the gratulations of the Senate, but alwayes confessing his crime: and declaring howe his mothers Ghoast appeared vnto hym, vrished his speedie destruction. And moreouer offering his heathenishe sacrifice by the handes of his Southsayers, he willed them to call vp his mothers soule, and to make attonement betweene hir and hym, that he might liue in peace & rest. Richarde the thirde king of Englande of that name, sonne to the duke of Yorke, came to the kingdome, murdering not onely his enimyes, but suche as had beene hys faythfull assistants: neyther sparing his Nephewes king Edwardes sonnes nor his owne wife, but imbruing himselfe in bloud on euery side, that hee might fette hym selfe sure in hys

Nero.

Richard the third.

Throne. When he came to a vilage cal-
Boſworth not far from Leyceſter, where he
ment to encounter his enemies. The fame
went that the nighte before the fielde was
fought, he had a dreadfull & terrible dreme.
For it ſeemed to him being a ſleepe, that he
ſaw diuers Images like terrible deuilles,
which pulled and haled him, not ſufferinge
him to take any quiet or reſt. The which
ſtraunge viſion not ſo ſtroke his harte with
a ſuddayne feare, as it ſtuffed his head and
troubled his minde with many buſie ima-
ginations. For incontinent after, his harte
being almoſt damped, he prognoſticated be-
fore the doubtfull chaunce of the battaile to
come, not vſing ſuch chearefulneſſe and co-
rage of mind and countenaunce as he was
accuſtomed to doe before he came towarde
the battayle. Wherevnto Polidore
addeth thys fitte and excellent Sen-
tence, I verily thinke this was no dreme, but
a punction and ſting of of his ſinfull Conſci-
ence, which being ſo much more wounded,
as the offence is more heynous in degree,
which ſurely if at any other time, yet princi-
pally at the hower of death, it calleth freſhly
to our remembraunce miſchiefes vnmitted

Polido-
rus virg.
angli. hiſt.
lib. 25.

and

and paynted forth before our eyes, punishementes imminent, so that in the momente of death we are pricked in spirite for oure euell life, and euen then we depart this world with intollerable vexation and griefe. Moyses verily doth most liuely expresse the misery of a guilty Conscience after this maner. And thy life shall hang before thee, and thou shalt feare both night and day, and shalt haue no assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were euening, and at the Eueuing thou shalt say, would God it were morninge, for the feare of thine harte which thou shalte feare, Deut. 28. Howe breefely and playnely doeth Moyses paynte oute the dayly, and continuall straites and agonies of a troubled Conscience. Semblably speaketh Salust of Cateline, For that impure minde of his, detested of God and man, could not be quieted night nor day. Therefore his couloure was pale and wanne, his eyes were soule and his pace sometime swift, sometime slow, in his face and countenaunce there appeared Tiranny. To this ende seruieth ỹ out of the boke of the Origin of ỹ world, where Moyses wryteth that our first parentes after their transgression, did hide them selues

Adam & Eue.

and shonne the sighte of God, theire fearefull conscience without all doubte condemning them, thereunto accordeth that in the same booke, of Iosephes brethren fearing lesse now theire Father being deade, he would remember their cruell dealing with him and reuenge the fact. And euen so was it with the traytor Iudas who weary of his life: by meanes of a wounded Conscience, strangled himselfe. But I cease from gathering any more examples, for it is moste euidente that as the sincere Conscience amonge the greatest sorrowes and miseries of this world, ministreth an incredible pleasure, and as it were taste of the heauenly blisse, so the impure and corrupte Conscience; recordeth his guiltes and transgressions, tormenteth man in this worlde: and in some maner representeth vnto him the furies sorrowes and cruell tormentes of Hell. And as we see it come to passe in those that haue bene incombred with a long consumption, albeit they dye at their appointed tyme, yet lying they seeme to dye leysurely, rather then to lyue, so it fareth with the guilled minde, and seared conscience, albeit they shall perishe euerlastingly, vnlesse

Iosephes brethren.

Iudas.

lesse they repent, yet they cannot vpon this earth go skotfree, but receiue a taste of their appointed kayze in the wozlde to come.

Pro. 17. An vnquiet Conscience hasteneth old age, & sickenesse.

Nowe if a merie and contented minde (accozding to the wise mans saying) pzocureth a flozishing age, and if a sozrowfull spirite dzyeth the bones, it cannot otherwise be, but the inward agony of the minde, bzeaketh out into the body, as well impayring the health, as the strength thereof. The Philosophers and Phisitions, holde this opinion, that through auritie & griefe of minde man pyneth awaye, wareth olde quickly, and is taken away with vntimely death. And therfoze they pzescribe in their dyets and ozdery vsuals, that all men desirous of manye yeares and long lyfe, ought to auoyde great pensiuenesse and grœuous cares as cause thereof. Whereby it maye easely appeare, howe pestelent and consuming a plague it is, which weakeneth and in the ende vtterly destroyeth bodye and minde, whereof Fabius speaketh excellently, if I can Judge anye thing in this wyse. There is nothing so busied and variable, nothing so rent and torne with dyuers affections, as is the dull and vncleane minde. For

when it attempteth anye thing, it is wonderfully distract with hope care and labor, and atchiuing his desire, it is wrong and racked with carefulnes, fearefulnes, and an expectation of al mischief. The same is confirmed by the holy Father S. Ambrose, The corrupte Conscience, starteth at euery cracke, and the raw woundes cannot be corrected, with any playster, whatsoeuer it heareth red or spoken, it accounteth as spoken againste it selfe. If a man eate, if he studye, if he praye, his crime is straighte waye before him, the Conscience witnesseth agaynst him, pleadeth against him condemneth him. Which thing considered by the Prophete, caused him to speake in this sort. The wicked are lyke the raging of the Sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast vp mire and dyrte, there is no peace sayth the Lorde to the wicked.

An euell Conscience afrayde of euery blast of winde.

The voices of an euell Conscience.

The heathen wryting of the manifolde tormentes of Hell, spake of the rauening byrde called a Gryffon, which should gnaw vpon mans lyuer, by the which they signifie nothing else but the gnawing of the conscience, mangling as it were manne wyth dreadfull remembrances of euill, committed in this lyfe. Of a verie lyke opinion are some

some Deuynes, who thinke that men shall abyde the greeuous tormẽts of Hel, in their Conscience which our Sauiour calleth the worme, gnawing the conscience of the wicked, neuer dying.

But as that opinion of theirs is not true, that the paynes of Hell are tollerated in the conscience onely. For out of doubt, al parts of man, internall and externall, shall perticulerly abide vntollerable payne: so I will not denie but that to other tormentes, thys of the conscience is added, as a principall weight or heape: whereby with great bytternesse of minde the wicked recognise, and set as it were present before their eies, their foule facts and detestable deedes done in their lyfe.

All partes shalbe tegred and tormented in Hell.

And to shutte vp this matter, whereas fayth is the onely Instrument, whereby man obteyneth iustification and immortalitie, which cannot be liuely in anye man, hauing a guylty conscience: hereby we may easely gather, how detestable and horrible a mischiefe that is. Therefore whosoeuer seeketh saluation by faith: it standeth them vpon to bridle their affections and concupiscences: and to commyt nothing against

An exhortation to beware of an euell Conscience

the

the commaundements of God. For he that transgresseth his conscience accusing hym, howe can he perswade himselfe, that God will be mercyfull vnto him. The faythfull in dæde nowe and then stumble and stagger, it cannot be denied, but out of all doubt, a true and lyuely fayth, hath no fellowshyp with the workes of darkenesse. Moreouer seing that death in it selfe of all terrible thinges is most terrible: it must needes be much more horrible in those who through the accusation of their owne conscience: looke for a spædie passage into hell tormentes. For nathelesse death it selfe is not so terrible as the vngsome opinio therof: for euen thereafter as the conscience is good or badde, so doth shee wyllingly embrace or dreadfully eschewe the same. The godly receyue death wyllingly and gladly, which they knowe to be sent vnto thē from God as a delyuerance and passage, out of the miseries of this troublesome worlde, into the porte of eternall rest, but the wicked declyne the same as the perillous rocks and sandes, where they must needes make shypwracke of eternall lyfe. Therefore it was truely and comfortably vttered by a certaine

certaine writte. We haue no cause to feare any thing in death, if our life haue not committed any thing procuring cause of feare. For it is not possible that he should dye impenitently that hath lyued well.

That a pure Conscience is to be respected in all humane actions, wherewith a man may content hymselfe.

WHEREAS there are manye thinges notably written by Cicero, which argue his great wisedome and knowledge, yet amongest them all hath he left no saying more excellent and deuine then that in his booke intituled Of olde age: to wyt. That a conscience of a lyfe well spent, and a remembrance of many good deedes is a thing most comfortable. Which worthie and memorable sentence, is not onely agreeable with the secret iudgement of anye good man: but is also consonant to the opinions of auncient Sages and good

The Solace and comforte of a good Conscience.

Deuines, who with one mouth doe with their voyces confirme the same. And it is worthy to be obserued, that Tully maketh not a common person to vtter that sentēce, but Cato surnamed ỹ Sensor, a verie graue and wise father. Whose vprightnesse in cyuill Regimēt, long experience in worldly affayres, worthie vertues, and singuler wisedome, all the Romayne hystories doe at large proposse and expresse: Cato without al controuersie spake so of his owne experience, contenting himselfe with that inwarde testimonie, when he sustayned the checkes of his superiors, the enuye of hys equalles, and the obloque of his inferiors, an vnthankfull reward for that hys vigelant and fatherly care for the prosperous and happie estate of his Citizens and countrie men. And it were to be wished that all men, whether they liue priuately or publikely, woulde in all their doinges set that paterne before their eyes, wherein they beholding themselues daylie, as it were in a cleere glasse, might euidently see what benefieth or blemisheth their vocation or condition of lyfe.

Cato.

And that these things may be the better consi-

considered: it shall not be amisse particularly to open & vnfolde the duetyes of some functions in the common weale, whereby men maye passe from the partes to the whole, and by a fewe to vnderstande what is conuenient for all.

Thou art called to be a Iudge, or chosen an Arbyter to composse controuersies, see that therein thou doe nothing against law and conscience respecting any person: Let neyther threttes, neyther flatterie draw thee one heare breadth from vprightnesse. Remēber in that matter thou ought neyther to haue friend nor enimie, Cosen nor straunger. For all these thinges ought to be set aside in iudgement. Yelde nothing to fauour nor consanguinitie; nothing to hatred or displeasure, nothing to hope or feare, which things commonly stricke men starke blinde in iudgement: & to be short, suffer not anye affection to be of thy counsayle, but consider the lawe, and moderate the same, if it be extreme with a good conscience. So did good Aristides, who appointed a daies man betweene two men, whereof the one to the ende he might draw him into displeasure with his aduersarie, pro-

The part of a iudge.

duced many impertinent thinges: as that his aduersarie had also much accused Aristides. Well sayth the Arbiter, omyt at thys tyme these matters, and alleage onely those thinges wherein he hath abused thee. Cato also as Valerius reporteth, sitting in iudgement vpon a wicked and infamous Senator, receyuing Pompeius Magnus his letters commendatorie in the behalfe of the malefactor: would not suffer thē to be opened. The good Iusticer would rather folow his owne internal iudgement, then obteyn thankes of that mightie man: teaching by his example that a Iudge ought not by any requeste, rewarde or fauour, to be led from the true execution of Iustice.

The part of a Counseller and Captayne.

Those that are called in anye state to be of the priuie counsayle, ought to direct all their consultations to the helth and wealth of their countriemen: And albeit he sée before his eyes present daunger with floudes of enuy and malyce, together with false rumoures, & vniust suspitions of his doinges, yet let him not follow vayne fame, which neyther profiteth the euill, neyther hurteth the good: but the iudgemente of his conscience as it were a guide and

Lodes-

Lodesman in all his actiõs. Neyther would I haue any man to mistake me, as though I ment that we should altogether neglect what the worlde thinketh and speaketh of vs (which minde ought to be farre from a christian for we ought not onely to avoyde euell, but to be far from all suspicions of euell, but I saye principally and chiefly our Conscience is to be respected. Yet we see the contrary in these dayes to vsuall, & that saying euery where verified, Multi famam pauci conscientiã verent, verentur. Many tẽder their owne fame and credite but very few theire Conscience. So Callicratides, a Captayne of the Lacedemonians, hauing greater respect of his priuate glory, then of hys Conscience, in preseruing of his Nauy receiued a great ouerthrowe of the enemy. Cleombrotus also fearing enuy onely, encountered rashly with Epaminondas and became almoste an vtter ruine to the Lacedemonians.

Richard plantaginate duke of yorke because he would not seeme to be inclosed and kept in his Castle of Sandale by a woman, and resting only vpon his credite and fame, hee hauing not aboue fiue thousand men, rashly

ioyned battayle with the Quéene, hauing xviij. M. good souldyers, contrary to counsayle, wisedome and al pollicy, and so rashly ronne into his destruction. Q. Fabius Maximus afterwarde of his doinges surnamed the Delair, moze discretely handled the matter who in that tottering time of his countrey, abstayned foz a seqson from fight with Hannibale, nothing accounpting of the peoples obloquies, who called him a timerous man and a towarde, being in dæde a right valiaunt man, and a stoute warriour, but contented himselfe with the inner consideration of his own counsailes, of whome Ennius wziteth thus.

Vnus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem,
Non ponebat enim rumores ante Salutem.

And assuredly if Fabius had not so done, the state of Rome had then vtterly ben subuerted. And therefoze hee rested vpon his owne Conscience, and not vpon populare rumoures, & liked rather that men should speake euell of his wise regimente, then with their fauourable acclamations, to cast away himselfe and indanger his countrey.

The Sages of the Lawe beinge called to

giue

giue out their opinions and speeth, eyther touching the righte iudgement of cases, or of factes and deedes done, maye not seeke to speake pleasantly but sincerely, they ought not to dispraise thinges commendable, nor commend thinges blameable, no not if hee be allured to the one with hope of great fauour and gayne, or drawen from the other with greate terrors and daungers. Suche a Lawyer was Papinianus of the Emperoure Antonius his counsayle, who being desired, & afterward with terrible threats commaunded to defend the Emperours tyranous facte, in murdering his yong brother Geta euen in his mothers lappe, was willing rather to abide death, thē to speake thinges contrarie to the law of nature and of al nations, answering Antonius frankly. O Emperoure it is more easie to commit paricide then to defend it: Suche another Lawyer was sir Iames Hales knight one of the iustices of the common place, who being called by men of great power & might, to subscribe vnto a deuice for ỹ disenheriting of the then Lady Mary, & Lady Elizabeth, would in no wise neither by curteous nor seuere speeches be broughte vnto it.

The office of good Lawyers.

Papinianus.

Sir Iames Hales.

And

And afterwarde in the dayes of bloude, when all his fellowes changed their coates he at a quarter sessions holden in Kente followed the lawe, and gaue charge vpon the statutes of King Henry the eyght and Edward the first, in derogation of the primacy of the Church of Rome. For whiche cause his former fidelity forgotten, he was committed to prison, and there so terrifyed by the bloudy Priestes, that he also at the last would shew himselfe a conformable man, whereby he was brought into the Quænes presence, and receiued wordes of grace and comfort, but alack whiles he obteyned this he loseth gods grace and his guiding spirit: and the Diuell that capitall and auncient enimy of man, leadeth him vnto a shallowe broke within halfe a mile of his own dwelling, where he hauing no doubte a gauled Conscience, for the shipwracke of his fayth lay downe groueling and with muche laboure drowned him selfe. His laste fal and punishment succeeding the same, doeth pythily enough perswade men to auoyde such declinations from Justice, and to contend with al their powers and might to imitate the former notable and worthy dæde of his

in

in pronouncing what law and equitie required, euen to those that then were mighty and malicious enemies of the same.

Those that be in authority and vse the same, to hale and pull from the ministerye, landes and possessions giuen and left to the Church, by the liberality of our forefathers cannot but haue an vnquiet Conscience, which albeit for a time it seeme to sleepe, yet it will wake at the laste, and to their great veration will sette before their eyes their rapine and spoyle, in degree nothing behinde detestable Sacrilege. Their Conscience will one day tell them that whereof now they cannot be ignorant: that these thinges were geuen of old toward the conseruing of religion, and to the needeful vses of the Church, to mainteyne Pastors, Preachers, Doctors, and interpreters of Gods law, to breede and bring vp yong Plantes that may in time, become fruitefull trees, in Gods orchard, as well in preching pure doctrine, as in confounding heresis. Spoilers of the church.

And to conuerte suche thinges to satisfie priuate auarice, rape, greedines, & vanity, what other thing can it be then moste hor-

rible impiety and wickednes. It auayleth them very litle to say that those goods haue bene abused, or that in the beginning they were dedicate to idolatrous vses, it is an old and good saying, propter abusum, res non tollenda, that thinges necessary and profitable are not to be taken away for the abuse sake only. And if we haue thought it hereto fore vnlawful & vngodly to abuse the goods of the Church in pompe and pleasure (as in deede they haue bene, which all good men lament) let vs think it more intollerable & impius, to make those thinges priuat which before were publique: and to transferre them from deuine, to prophane vses. Touching the exchange of the possessors, Luther that worthy man was wont fynely to say, that these goods, were sometime geuen to Asses and Swine, meaning rude monkes and Godlesse Epicures, and now at the last they returne to like persons agayne, surely he spake rightly: for excepte a fewe, such goods haue ben a pray to hunters, foulers, and such like. But God (such is his righteous and iust dealings, although secrete) suffereth not these breakers of deade mens wils and testamentes, to haue theirs performed

formed.

For commonly suche fathers doe deliuer like children, who being Coggers, foysters, and at the last banckeroute: inioy not commonly in the third dissente, goods so racked and drawen together. As for their dedication to prophane vses, it is no new obiection. And the aunswere shapen of olde maye yet serue to wit that idolatry ceasling those goods ought to bee imployed to the vse of Christes church, euen as Constantine the Emperour toke the ecclesiasticall goodes of the Donatistes, and bestowed them vpon the Catholick church, wherof when the Donatistes complained as of great wrong and iniury offred by the catholiques. S. August. afterward defended the fact, and aunswered them. That those goods in déede, were the churches, and might well by the superiour maiestrate, bee taken from those that were no members of the same, and restored to the right owners, to wit the Church onely.

In whome the property of church goods doth reste.

These possessions and donacions then do appertaine neither to the Prince, nor to the Priest, nor to the people perticulerly, but to the whole church and their property can-

not by any meanes be chaunged. Ioseph bought all the substaunce of the Egiptions to the house of Pharao, but the landes and fieldes of the Priestes he touched not. Gen. 47. The reason is giuen in another place, That amongs other priuileges of ỹ clergy their goods should neuer be allienated from them, for that their groundes are a perpetuall possession. Num. 25. Therefore the blessed martir Laurence led by ỹ holy ghost, would not deliuer Decius the Emperoure the treasure of the Church. These grædye worldlinges when the matter will not support then, turne to the persons, and they saye that ministers are idle and liue without labour, that they are couetous and ambicious: therfore the lesse portions will serue them, and thereby their mindes will not be so busied about worldly affaires, and therewithall they ought to be contente, for humility and pouerty say they, is the preachers profession and such doth our sauioure pronounce blessed and happy.

Euel biters and sclaunderers of ehe ministerye.

What idlenesse and wante of labour honest ministers liue in, God knoweth, but it may truely be sayd of moste of them that their study which Epicures call idleneſſe, consumeth

consumeth the strength of the body, and weareth the very soule, as all that put the same in vre can testify. And as for the Auarice and couetousenesse of the Preachers let that fault touch some, but it cannot bee verifyed of the moste part. For dayly experience, in the country abrode, letteth them see ministers, widdowes, and orphaynes, to haue scarce sufficient to pay their creditors, and to hire them a cotage to hide them in, from storms and tempestes: be it that a few of the clergy in place of honor prouide better. But not onely the poore country minister, but also the doctor in the Cathedrall Churches, haue lefte those whome God willed them to care for, in no better estate then I haue sayde, power and habilitie not seruing them any better. Is this thē that great grædinesse which so much græueth these contemners of Gods worde and of his ministers?

Now in that they will haue ministers, and preachers, to follow with Friers wilfull pouerty: besides that they do violence to the holy scripture, which speaking of a Christian and Godly life, generally these good men forsoth maye not abide that those precepts

precepts should be extended to their bellies but to the poore ministers only, they also follow Iulian the Apostate, who taking from poore Christians their goods and liuinges, told them that it was their profession if a man take their coates, to giue him their cloakes also, with suche prety conceites, doe these Hypocrites sporte them selues, and spoyle the poore ministery of their dew and lawfull liuelehode.

But some forsoth can not abyde suche extremity, they will haue the tẽporalities only as they cal them, that is they wil haue the Royaltie, & the ministers shall haue necessaries: And would god they would leaue Christes church, but to serue euen necessities, but according to the commõ prouerb. They giue a flee, and take a Cammell, they leaue a louse and take an horse. It were good for them to haue in remembraunce the old saying: It is a destruction for a man to deuour that which is sanctified, and after the vowes to inquire. Pro. 20. Of the which you may rẽde further in Moyses and Mala. Leuit. 22. Mala. 11.

The office and duty

Those that haue the Tutell or wardship of yong Gentlemen, oughte to vse their landes

landes and liuinges, and chiefely their Pupils in good education, as they may with a sincere Conscience, giue a reckening therof another day, both before God and man. But nowe a dayes the nomber is greate of those that more respect their owne gayne, then the good guyding of their pupilles, so that simple and weake infancy, wanteth not her vnderminers, Demostenes complaneth muche of his Tutors, that they suppressed his parentes goods guilefully, and respected nothing his good education. Such a Tutor was Richard duke of Glouceſter, of whose life and death I haue spoken somwhat & therefore wil be the shorter in this matter.

Of Patrons toward their wards

It is much to be lamented, that wardes in England are as commonly bought and solde, as are brute beastes and Cattell, and vngodly mariages often times made, betweene eyther infantes, or such as be of tender yeares, who before they come to their mature time of discretion, are led by other mens eyes and hartes, to that, will they nill they, which liketh not them but their Guerdons & Tutors. Whereby it fauleth out most commonly, that those that are linked

Of the mariages of wardes.

ked together in such wise with formal matrimonies, and ceremoniall, rather then materiall, doe not loue, but mortally hate, and detest ech other, whome neuer liking loue of lawful matrimony, but greedy gain forcibly coupled and conioyned. Dayly deuorces and often murders insuing such supposed marriages in this our country, sheweth forthy incommodity of the same: but especially is most lamentable that our law is here repugnaunt to the diuine law, which in semblable cases permitteth to ech party free election, but there is good hope, that such as be in authority wil also reform this thing so farre out of all good forme.

Their diuers and sundry good prouisions in all other matters, biddeth vs loke for the like in this, which God graunt.

Of byers & sellers.

To descend to lesse matters, let men in bying and selling, respect their Conscience, and not follow peruerse custome, let them thinck that there is no good gayne, where playne dealing hath no place. And to omit those that sell not their wares, according to their valure, but for as muche as they can: doe we thinck that those men respect theire Conscience, that mingle their wares and corrupt

corrupt the same. For example, if Vintner selling wine with water for pure wine & coulloring, els mingle his wines, cannot haue herein a good and honeste meaning. Anacharsis sayd truely, the Market to be a set place for Fraude and Rapine, meaning that men in buying and selling had no respecte of a good Conscience. It were needeful in contractes for men, not onely speak to nothing sauing truth, but also that they cõcrile not from the byer any faultes, of such thinges as they sell.

We must no doubt decline from al things that agree not with the internal iudgemẽt of the conscience, & therefore Vlpian in the Digestes writeth gravely. That euen the lawe of nature commaundeth vs not to increase our substance, with other mens losses.

Against rash and vayn swearing.

But those men are much worse, who in their othes vse against al right iudgement, a kinde of peruerse subtilty, and wilynesse, not onely abusing their Conscience, but scorning Gods holy name. Such fraude was practised by one of those ten captiues, whom after the field foughten at Cannas, Annibal sent to Rome for the exchange of Prisoners: taking their oath only, for their

returne, who whē they had taken their leue of Anniball and departed the Campe, one of them by and by retourneth back saying that hee had forgotten something behind him and supposing by that sleight his oth to bee satisfied, hee speedeth him self in his iorney, and ouertaketh his fellowes before night.

The Godles sleightes and slieghes of many to illude their othes.

Now when these ten could not draw to any Conclusion in the Senate house, they al retourned to Anniball saying that one who thought that by such guilful meanes, he had discharged himself.

Which thing when the Senate had knowledge of, they caused him to be apprehended and sent vnto Anniball. Cicero sayth that this was an illusion, and no good interpretation of his oth, for fraud and Guile doth bynde and not dissolue penurye. It was then nothing else but a peuish wilinesse peruersly imitating Prudence and Wisedome.

Anniball.

Anniball himselfe at what time hee had taken truce with the Romaynes, for forty dayes: in the night time hee spoyled the fieldes, and when the league was aleaged he aunswered that he had not broken the same, which extended only to the day and not

not to the night. The like we may reade in Plutarch of Cleomenes, in Strabo of ỹ Thracians. Such practises are red euen of Popish Prelates, who with fraudulent interpretations of their othes haue sucked the bloud of those that reposed all fayth in their promises, and cõmitted their liues vnto their protection. Cleomenes.

At what time Lewis king of Fraunce besieged Adelbartus an Erle in the Castle of Bamberge, which by meanes of the commodius situacion, and good furniture of Artillery, could by no meanes be gotten: whẽ he saw the lions skinne would not auayle, he put vppon a Woulues skinne, leauing manhode, & practising subtilty. The king then sent a Bishop vnto the Earle, to moue him to come to some Parle with the King: giuing him his faith that he would reduce him safe and sound into his Castle againe. A popishe Prelates fraude. The Earle was soone perswaded and aduentured to goe with the bishop. And whẽ they had not passed many paces out of the Castle gate. Were it not good said the Prelate for vs to eate a morsel of meate before we go vnto the king, with a good will quod the Earle, and so retourned vnto ỹ Castle

to dyner agayn. After meate they arose and came to the King, who immediately cauſed the Earle to be apprehended and executed.

Now when ỹ Earle ſaw he muſt needes dye, he complayned of breach of fayth and trothe: vnto whom the Biſhop made this aunſwere. That he performed his promiſe in that hee brought him ſafe and ſound into his Caſtle to eate meat, and for that hee renewed not his promiſe afterward, he could not bee charged with violating of his oth.

Ottho Phringenſis.

The recorder of this matter putteth down his own iudgement of the deede, in this wiſe. Let other men iudge of this Prelate, what they liſt, as though it were done for the peace, and quietneſſe of the whole Lande. But for my own part I thus thinck, that no Chriſtian ought once to conceaue any ſuche thought, eſpecially in ſo great a matter of life and death.

The ende of this Prelate was fearefull & ſtraunge afterward, when the Elements moſt terribly ſeemed with fyre to burne, and with noyſe to be confounded together the mighty God ſtrack him with his Thunderbolt and ſo hee miſerably dyed: who ſo-

euer

euer examineth his own Conſcience and ſecret iudgement, ſhall ſone ſee that ſuch ſleightes proceede of an vnhoneſt and malicious politey, meere contrary to nature, beeing moſt shamefull and vile for any liberall man but once to thincke vpon, much leſſe to put the ſame in any execution. For Nature her ſelfe deſireth thinges that bee right and iuſt, and deſpiſeth the contrary: neyther will ſhe permit commodity without honeſty, to haue any place with her. So Ioſua kept the league and truce taken with the Sabonites, notwithſtanding their fraud and circumuention, neither would hee by any meanes breake his fayth and trouth giuen vnto them.

Albeit there is ſome diuerſity of iudgement among the learned, whether Ioſua did wel or not, in ſparing thoſe people both whome God commanded him to deſtroy, and alſo of whome hee was circumuented, and deceiued in making of the league. For hee ſeemed not to bee bounde by anye Religion to keepe that fayth which he gaue, deceyued with their Guile, & that vnto Gods enemies. Theſe things ſeeme ſomedeale hard to be diſcuſſed. Firſt of all Ioſua could Of the Gabonites.

not be ignorant, that all those people that dwelled in the Land of Promise ought by Gods commaundement, vtterly to be routed out. But that the Gabaonites did inhabit any part of that land he wist not. Therfore albeit in some respect for ignorance, Iosua might seeme to pretend excuse: for that the Gabaonites comming with their olde shoes, and torne Garments, abused him, feyning them selues to be people that came from far: yet he cannot auoyd blame both for his ouermuch security and credulity, and also for his negligence, in that according to the manner, he inquired not at Gods mouth what was conuenient for him to doe.

There be some that goe about to lose this knot after this maner. That Iosua did both execute Gods commaundement, and also that he well performed his promise. For whiles he suffereth them to liue he offereth the better, and in that he maketh them seruill men, he executeth the first, for Vlpian in the Digests compareth perpetuall seruitude with death. S. Ambrose sayth, Iosua asked not the Lords will, by meane of to much credulyty, which commonly al playn

Ambrocius in offi.

and

and good natures haue in them, & hee addeth this fine and golden sentence. So holy and reuerend was fayth in those dayes, that collusion and fraude was rarely founde amongste men.

This is then the cause why Iosua toke peace and truce with the Gabaonites. Now that he killed them: not deprehending their Guile, but brought them in seruitude: was because he wolde not breake his worde bound with an oth: leste in blaming other mens vnfaythfulnesse, hee should seeme to incurre the same fault himselfe. Hee saued their liues therefore, but hee made them slaues: his sentence contayned mercy, but the long punishment had in it seuerity, and thus far S. Ambrose.

Others write hereof in this wise. We gather that god accepted and ratified Iosua, his oth giuen to the Gabaonites, not in y he liked fraud and Guile, but that their ruddy desire, and submission pleased him. For first God promised Iosua to be with him in relieuing and defending of the Citie Gabaon. Secondly, when Saule had caused certaine of these Gabaonytes to be murdered, contrarie to this promise of Iosua, made vnto

Lauaterus in Ios. 9, P. Martir in 2. Sam. 21.

vnto their auncestors, God was angrie and sent a famine among the Israelites, which continued by the space of three yeres, neyther coulde his wrath be mitigated, vntyll such tyme as seauen of Saules sonnes, or nærest kinsmen were hanged: It is credible that Gods speciall pleasure was to haue the Gabaonytes preserued. And it is lykely that Iosua being a Prophete, vnderstode so much: Mine owne iudgement is this. That whereas the chiefe cause whye the Lord God would haue the inhabitants of that country destroyed was: lest they might afterward draw the Israelites from the true worshipping of the lyuing God, as Moses declareth in Deutero. & Num. 22. These Gabaonytes whom the second booke of kings, accounteth among the Amorits, were both humble and lowly, and also willing to imbrace the Religion of the Hebrewes, moued thereunto with the fame of Gods great miracles, and wunders which he shewed in defending and preseruing the Israelites in Egipt, in the wildernes and about Iordayn, for so them selues confessed, Iosua therefore spared their liues, but toke from them their liberty: whereby he suppo-

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sed all occasions of auerting the Israelites from the liuing God to be remoued away: and so hee imbasing them and weakning them with seruitude, kept him selfe pure frō the spot of infamous periury, and wicked Atheisme, wherewithall the Godlesse people with opē mouthes would haue most shamefully blotted him.

The fact of Iosua therefore is very commendable, and letteth vs see what regard men ought to haue of Leagues, and truces confirmed with othes betweene them and their enemies, contrary to the vnconstante dealinges of the Romaines in times past, and the french Catholiks, in this our time. For the Senate of Rome did violate and break the League taken with the Samnites and confirmed with solemne othes of their Consulles. T. Veturius, Caluinus, and Sp. Postumius Albinus. Supposing that their othe was discharged, when they had delyuered the sayde Consulles backe into the Samnyttes handes, to be handled at their pleasures: so that it is sayde of one no lesse finely then truely. If the Romaines had kept like faith with the Samnites, which they exacted of other: eyther they had not remay-

The periury of the Romaines

ned at al, eyther elſe they had ſerued the Samnyttes. And not much vnlyke was their dealings, with the Numantynes. Wherby it is moſt euident that the Romaines dyd not alwayes ſo preciſely kæpe their fayth holye and vnbroken, as ſome would ſæme to importe. Although I ſée what may be anſwered in their behalfe: to wyt, that concluſions or articles takē betwæne the cappitaines are ſo far forth to be obſerued on both partes, as the ſuperioure magiſtrate (which was the Senate among the Romaines) aſſenteth thervnto. So ſay they the concluſiō of peace made by Mancinus the Conſull, with the Numantines was of no moment, the whole Senate miſlyking the ſame. And ſo Camillus would not ſtand to the conditions of peace, which the Senate made with the french men, without his cōſent being dictator or chiefe officer. Which aunſweres or rather fryuolous excuſes, I will not now examine: only I take that ſaying of Mithridates, worthy remembrāce. Romulus and the Romayne ſtock haue ſucked with wolues milke, wolues condicions.

Auguſt dei viuita te dei lib. cap. 22.

Camillus.

Iuſtinius. liber. 38.

And touching the Tragicall doings of the Catholiques of late in the realme of Fraunce,

Fraunce, what tonge or pen can sufficiently set forth the same. Surely all posterities wil abhor and detest such infidelity, ioyned with barbarouse cruelty, when they shall rede in histories of Edicts, & decrees, made in Parlaments, of leagues & truces, taken and confirmed betwene party and party, with solemne contestation of Gods most reuerende maiestie: of most assured and intere frendship, peace, amity, and Concord, with an vtter oblivion of all former quarels, and displeasures. Wherevpon insued Ambassages Gratulatory, from great and mighty Princes round about: and mariages betwene great estates on eyther party, most strongly to vnite and knit this knot of frendship: and notwithstanding all these in ỹ midle of pastimes and triumphes to murder so many graue fathers and Matrons, such semely and comly gentlemen and gentlewomen in their beds, that had reposed them selues in the fayth and troth of their Prince, so many sucking babes in their cradels, ỹ were not able to discern betwene the right & wrong, is such an exãple as vnto ỹ day hath not ben heard of. Surely it is expressely agaynst that law of warre,

The late tragical doings in Fraunce.

appoynted by God. Deut. 20. which is after this manner. If thou shalt come to beseege any cittie, thou shalte firste offer them peace, and if they accepte it, and open theire gates vnto thee, then shalte thou saue all the people of that Citty, and they shall serue thee and pay thee tribute.

But here the subiects yeld their goodes, their townes, yea their bodies into the hand of their Lord: & yet we see what immanity was executed vpon them. Secondly al mē ought to graunt to forreyn ennemies, the law of Suppliaunts, if they demaund it, Deut. 20. and therewithall not to touch the vnarmed multitude, as infants, yong folks auncient and aged personnes, Deut. 20. And so the Ethnucks did soundly kéepe the law of Suppliantes, and thought Iupiter to be the Patron of them, and reuenger of their ennemies, as the mo?all of that fable of Aesope of the Eagle and Scarabæs doeth declare: but in Fraunce we see no consideration of this law, but a general hauock o? bouchery to haue bene made of al ages, sexes, and degrees, withoute anye difference at all.

The law dew to suppliantes & to such as yeld themselues in war.

Pausanias eyteth a wo?thy example of a

plage

plage that fel vpon ỹ Acheans because they broke the law of Suppliants. When (sayth he) the Achayans drewe the suppliantes out of the Temple, Gods reuenging wrath was not sloe nor prolonged against thē, for there happened a vehement and suddayne earthquake, which turned vp not onely the wales, but also the whole Citie, in such sort, that no signes thereof appeared. And the Lacedemonians are much spoken against in histories, because they murdered the inhabitauntes, after they had yelded their Citty, and great miseries and calamities came vpon them for such vnmercifull dealinges. Pausanias in Achā.

But of al doubte Conquestes and victories ought not to be insolente and bloudy, but modest and mercifull, as well for the establishing of peace as for the conseruation of those which be vanquished and ouercome, it is a good saying. He that cōquereth him selfe in victory, is twise a Conquerour: Neyther may the victor repute himself out al peril. Agamemnō is admonished in Seneca: that he should not vse victories crewelly, vseth this arrogant spēech: Wher of should the conquerour be afrayd, Cassandra aunswereth, Of that whiche he feareth not, Conquestes ought to haue moderation as a companion. Mimus.

not. That is to say, the victor ought to doute many suddayne chaunses. And the same Author in Troade. When Pirrhus sayde, No lawe commaundeth to spare captiues, Agamemnon answereth, That which lawe forbiddeth not, shamefastnesse forbiddeth, Pirrhus. The victor may doe what him listeth: Agamemnon: That man ought to doe leste, that he may do most. Wherfore Ageselaus is much commẽded for his clemency, for that in his orations he accustomed to admonish his souldyers, that they shoulde not handle their captiues cruelly, but alwayes to remember them to be men which were fallen into calamity: whereunto men as long as they liue vpon earth are subiect.

Ageselaus

The propertye of the Lyon.

God hath purtured in the Lion a Picture of valiaunt warriers, for in the Lion there is not onely a stoute courage, conioyned with the strength of body, but also an heroical clemency, toward such as fal down before him, according to that vearse.

Percere prostratis scit nobilis ira Leonis.

A good warriour ought therefore to exprees both their vertues, as Virgil writeth most grauely.

Percere subiectis & debellare superbos.

When

When one of Sigismundes counsayle, expostulated with him, for that he did not only pardon his ennimies liues and goods, whome he had taken, but receiued them among the number of frendes, the Emperour aunswered after this maner. Thou thinkest it good to kill thy emeny, because a dead man cannot bite, according to the prouerb: But I do kil mine enemy whilst I spare him crauing pardon: and doe make him my frende, in that I aduaunce him to credite. A notable wise saying no doubt of an Emperour. Lyke examples are founde in the auncient hystories of the Romaynes, who for that they did religiously kepe the lawe of Suppliants: written amongst the lawes of Heraldes: they adioyned vnto them many Princes and people in amitie & friendshippe. Sigismūd.

But peraduenture some will aunswere that the french Catholiques did not breake any law of armes in vsing pollicie against their enimies, for saint Augustine in hys questions vpon Iosua sayth. When warre is iust & lawfull: he swerueth not from iustice that pursueth his enimies, either by strength or pollicy. And euen so Antigonus, when S. Augustine.

Antigonus. one asked him howe he shoulde deale with hys enimies, answered: Eyther with fraude or dinte of sworde: eyther openly or secretly. And Virgil. Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirat. Saint Hierome alleageth that verse as seculer, but liketh very well therof: so farre forth as no fayth & troth ought be violate. But I thinke the word Dolus in ỹ verse to be taken of honest and lawfull policies in war: And that all subtill cauillations, fraudes and periuries, are excepted. For the word no doubt signifieth Prudens Stratagema.

Hier. in 17. Ezeh.

The king of Denmarck his pollicy.

The King of Denmarck using fraud and periury agaynst his subiectes is much discommended, for that when hee coulde not bring in by maine might, certaine pernicious outlawes and pirates, hee brought it to passe by pollicy: for he pretending open war agaynst forreyn enimies, sommoned his men of war to come and serue him, and among the rest sent also vnto those theeues both graunting them pardon for all theire offences committed agaynst him, and also promised them for their seruice large and liberall wages. And when they were commen, he straight way put them to death.

Such

Such pollicyes hauing periury anexed vn-
to them ought to be detested of al good men
and chiefly of Princes, whome verity and
constancy in words of promises, haue al-
wayes singulerly commended.

The french Stratagemes are not much vn-
like the danish dealings, sauing ỳ their per-
iury was more heynous in Fraunce: for
that the aduerse part were already come in
and had layd down their armour and wea-
pon, and had on their part giuen out infal-
lible and euident signes, of their loue and
fidelity to their Prince.

The cruell dæde of Peter Arrogon is
much detested, who slew eyght thousande Peter Ar-
french men in Cicil, for that they had sur- rogon.
prised that Ile in his absence, and yet he ex-
ercised his cruelty vpon forreyners and
straungers, but these vpon their own na-
tion and nere kinsmen. They seemed to A. Com-
haue set before their eyes the dissimulation modus.
of Antonius Cōmodus, whose maners they
haue exactly expressed: For when he was
wearyed with filthy pleasures, wherevnto
he was exceedingly geuen, lest he might
seeme to spend time in doing nothing, hæ

deuysed with him selfe how he might murder the Nobles of his Empire: especially he caused one Julianus to be slayn suddenly and horribly in his bedde, and yet in the sight of men he would kisse and embrace him, calling him his swæte hart, and welbeloued father. Perhapely they looked neuer home, and beheldc the pollicies of some of their Auncestors. We reade of Charles the by. King of Fraunce, that after long and grœuous troubles in that country, he entered into league and affinity with the duke of Burgondy: and promised most constantly to bury all auncient quarrels and grudges: & therupon they both receiued at the priestes handes the host consecrated, as the manner was in those dayes, in confyrmation of their othes and promyses, yet notwithstanding, when as the sayd king hadde inuited the duke to come to Montrell, pretending to entertayne him most frendely, and to exhibit vnto him spectacles and tryumphes, he suffered the duke to be murdered vppon the bridge there, as they were in communication together.

Carolus septimus Gal rex.

Some may answere that how these men kept their fayth they wil not examin, but

Nothing is profitable

but by these doinges there followed tranquility and quietnesse vnto those Regions, and country: I answere let it be so accounted for ỹ p̄sẽt time, but if we cõsider, the consequence of such truce breakings, & immayne cruelties, we shall finde in the ende vtter subuersion to haue ensewed greate houses, and families therefore. Surely all good men imbrace that saying, There is nothing profitable vnlesse it be also honest. Aristidea,

And therefore Aristides did openly in the audience of the people reiecte the polliticke counsell of Themistocles concerning the burning of the Lacedemonians Nauy: because being profitable it was not thoughte honest, Furius Camillus receiued not the children of the Lords of Phalice, betrayed to him by their Schoolemaster, but stripped him naked and deliuered him to be whipped home wyth roddes by the same Children. Themistocles. F. Camillus.

Singly vertues in times past haue bene reported to be these, Iustice, gentlenesse, and clemencie: but crueltie, and outrage haue bene misliked. Scipio hath in all ages bene praysed, who was wonte to say, that he had rather saue one citezen, then slay a thousand

rule vnlesse it be honest.

Howtes vertues.

thousand enimies, which sentence the Emperour Antonius surnamed Pius did often repeate. Contrariwise it was a shamefull bywoorde used against yong Tiberius, to be called Clay tempered with bloud. It is no sufficient allegation to say, that kings haue absolute power of lyfe and death ouer their subiectes. There cannot be alleaged anye greater authoritie, then that the Dictators hadde at Rome, in whome was the soueraigne power of peace and warre, and of lyfe and death, and that without appeale. Yet might they not execute a Citizen, hys cause vnheard, and without condemnation by order of law. Onely murderers and theeues doe take awaye mens lyues, without order of law, without hearing the partie pleade his cause, and to speake for hymselfe, but what neede many woordes. It is cleerer then the noone day, that cruelty, periurie, and filthie adulterie, are the veries proper noates and badges of Papistes in these our dayes.

The proper and especial notes and signes of Papistes.

It is much to be lamented that the noble and famous Nacion of Fraũce, shold learn of Pope and Turcke, vnto whom they linck themselues in league to care for no promise, fayth,

fayth, or oth: and I pray God in the ende they be not scourged by Antichrist, whom they trust, and distrust God, with whome whiles they seeke to conserue peace, and concorde, they cānot chuse but be at discord and open warre with God. The old Poets doe feine that the proud Giauntes waged battaile agaynste heauen, whereby they ment vndoubtedly, those that despise lawes and breake their oaths, most blasphemously abusing Gods name. And those that easily commit such offences, the Deuel doth wholy possesse their harts by litle and litle, and breedeth in thē a deadly hatred against God, wherby they ronne into foule and heynous facts, and so at the laste fall into tragicall paynes, both in this world and in the world to come. Which the Poets ment also to expresse in Iupiter his conquests, ouer the sayd Giauntes called Philegians, who were caried quick to Hel, with a cloud sent out by Neptune, of whom Virgil writeth thus.

Phlegiasq; miserrimus omnes,
Admonet et magna testatur voce per vmbras,
Discite insticiā moniti et nō temnere diuos.

How greeuously and odiously men doe prophane

Periury an vsurping offence.

prophane Gods name by periury, it will playnely appeare by the difinition of the same.

The definition of an oth

An oath is an asueration, of a thing possible and lawfull, made with the inuocation of Gods name, wherein we pray God to caste downe vpō vs his malidiction & vengeance, if in swearing we say vntruth, or wittingly & willingly breake our oth, In bare and naked promises, wherein we promise to doe truely, it is sayd: Let your communication bee yea, yea, and nay, nay, but of oathes there are seuere preceptes, Thou shalt not forsweare thy selfe, but shalt performe thine oath to God: Wherevnto he aodeth a fearefull Communication, For the lord wil not hold him guiltles that taketh his name in vayne: There is no doubt but Gods maiestie and name, is wonderfully abused, when men ronne into wilfull periury. For in that we cal vpon him to be our witnes and Judge. Our wilfull periury denieth him to be a true witnes, argueth him of falsehode, procureth his plagues, and bindeth vs by our owne mouthes to abide the same. There can then no greater contumely be done against God, nor no more greeuous crime com-

committed by man then wilfully to make a mock and byword of Gods name: where vnto if men adde wilful murder, and shedding of innocent bloude: they must nedes fill vp euen to the brimme, the measure of iniquitie.

Such men are vngraciously ledde and drawne to punishment and vengeance: so that among such transgressors, you shall skarce finde one that hath in this worlde escaped the reuenging hande of almightie God: as we may plainly see by Caine, Saule, Richarde king of Englande, the thirde of that name, and infinite other examples. Hereof the Poets haue written thus.

Ah miser & si quis primum periuria celat,
Sera tamen tacitas pena venit pedibus.

Of synners indurate & past grace.

The former examples are speciall, but when we beholde things more publike and generall, we see a more sorowfull Tragedie. For we may reade of the most noble and flowrishing Families of Princes, to haue benefitte rooted vp, for wicked murders and periurie. And so God doth shewe himselfe to be a defender and conseruer of iustice and politike order: and that his pleasure is, that the internall mo-

Examples of Princes and people punished for their periury.

cions

tions of mannes mynde, shoulde conformes themselues to the worcking of Gods spirit, and also that the external members should be kept within the compasse of good lawes and regiment. Which whosoeuer haue broken, they haue alwayes bene accounted factious, seditious, periured, and men noted otherwise, with vile reproches and infames. Such men were the Carthaginenses reputed, who vnconstant and slypping in in all their wordes and promises, sought still by guylefull and craftie interpretations to illude their othes, who at the last being vtterly subdued, and their citie sticke and stone consumed, euen to the grounde with fyre: doe bidde vs beholde the ende of leuitie and periurie. Philyp of Macedonia was wont to playe with his fayth, as children doe with stickes: which was the cause as the wise Ethnickes thought of the suddayne and straunge ruine of all his posterity: for within twelue yeares after, his son Alexander in the floure of his time, died either with poyso or with immoderate drink whose mother, wife, and two sonnes, were murdered of his Nobles; neither was there found anye patrone of so royall a famely.

Carthage.

Philip.

And

And in our fathers dayes Lewis, king of Hungaria, induced by Eugenius bishop of Rome, brake the league which hee hadde made with Amaruthes the great Turcke: and drew that Tirant to bend all his power agaynst Christendome, being at that time otherwise busied in the east, in which warre, Lewis the king with the greater part of his army, miserably perished, the smart whereof not onely Hungaria feeleth, but all Christendome lamēteth at this day. And to omit those thinges that histories recorde, many examples as well private as publique, daily experience in mans life, do verify the same: whereof it came to passe that the old writers, appoynted certayne Gods, to be reuengers of periury, and Homecide: for they beholding such dayly examples, not without greate admiration, iudged that those thinges came not to passe by chaunce, and aduēture, but that some diuine power was especially appoynted to be the punisher of periury & wilful murther.

Eugenius Pope of Rome and Lewis king of Hungarie

And hitherto, I thought in some private callings and condicions of mans life, to poynt out as it were with the finger, the

ioy and solace of a pure and sincere Conscience, and the endlesse veration and sorrow of the contrary: now I will discend to certein questions, which men commonly moue, about mans Conscience.

Whether it be enough for men to rest vppon their Conscience.

It is demaunded commonly, whether an erring Conscience doeth condemne man? That is to say, whether mans will swerving and discenting from reason deceiued, condemneth a man: we must obserue that it is the part of Reason, to giue light vnto Will wandring in darknesse, and grosse ignorannce: and therefore Will discenting from Reason disceiued, must needes offend and doe wickedly. Yea doth euill I say, not in his own nature, but because the Conscience so iudgeth of it self, albeit it be perfite and good.

And therfore the diuines playnly affirm, that Will discenting from Conscience and Reason, whether she be sincere or corrupt, in what kind of action soeuer she be busied, whether they be good, euell, or indifferent, she offendeth and committeth sinne.

And from hence is derived the solucion of that question: Whether the Conscience erring excuseth: That is, whether the Will con-

consenting with Reason, swarueing from truthe offendeth; for if Will dissenting from Reason deceaued transgresse, surely it must needes folow, that ths same consenting with Reason doth not offend: For of thinges contrary, there follow contrary sequelles, as not onely Cicero but the Logitians generally, and experience proueth. We must herein obserue that as a seemely and comly body is so called, when there is right shape and composition of all the reste of the members of mans body: and it is the named euell fauoured if in any one limme or ioint, there be any thing vncomly, crooked, or lame: euen so that is only accounted good, which is absolute and consumate in al partes, and so it is named euell when any litle thing wanteth, to the perfection therof, or to speake playnly and briefely: Euell proceedeth of special vices and defects, but goodnesse of that which is on euery side without fault or blemishe. So y in this matter it is enough if either y Will be corrupted, or Reason which is the guide and ruler of Will.

But this thing wilbe playn by the application of an example. Those that did both

curse the Apostles of Christ, & committed the to prysō, minding to execute them, with most paynfull deathes, thought that they offered a most acceptable sacrifice to God, euen as Christ himselfe beareth witnesse. The time shall come sayth he, that whosoeuer killeth you, shal thinck he doth GOD good seruice,

These mens reasons and vnderstanding was meruelously shadowed with darcknes and error, and yet their will and intelligence did concurre together. And Paule himselfe when he persecuted the Church of Christ, and cast his seruaunts into bondes: had a Will obedient to Reason, wandring in great darcknes. And yet that Apostle afterward confesseth, that albeit, he did that ignorauntly through vnbeliefe: yet that hee greeuously offended God, albeit through repentaunce, he afterward obteyned Gods mercy. For God doth easily and sone forgiue simply ignorance repenting the fault, and where mallice and wilfull will wanteth, the faulte is reputed lesse in Gods sight.

I will not haue any man mistake, me as though I thought that any kinde of ignoraunce

raunce should eyther excuse a man, or be accounted tollerable in Gods sight. For without doubt all kinds of ignoraunce are blame worthy, Else the law in Moyses shold seeme to bee in vayne, appoynting a sacrifice to be offered vnto God for ignorance. Nu. 15. but my meaning is, that ignorantia facti, as they terme it wanting negligence and security, may seeme to haue some probable excuse.

And touching Paules error, it had a show of probability and likelihode. It was written by Moyses that if any Prophete did arise teaching thinges contrary to the lawe, he should out of hand be stoned to death: that Jesus was such a one, Paule herd by the reports almost of all men, and that hee was for that cause, by the Priests, Scribes Pharisies, Seniours, and by consent of all the people apprehended, accused, founde gylty, condemned and finally crucified: for he neuer herd nor sawe personally Christ, neyther any of his Apostles, teaching or worcking of myracles. Paules error therefore did arise as wel in respect of the matter, as of the person: Wherein his minde and Reason drowned in ignoraunce, hadde

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an agreeable will whereby as hee offended, yet that came not to passe by wilfull ignorance, but by a zealous study of the law, couered with simplicity, as him selfe to Timothy witnesseth.

The true ground and foundacion of a good Conscience.

The scolasticall diuines doe also moue another question, whether the Conscience bindeth: That is whether a man ought to doe al thinges that his Conscience moueth him vnto: Moreouer if it happen Conscience, and the superiour maiestrate to prescribe things mere cõtrary, they ask which of them a man ought to obey and followe. Wherein this is commonly their iudgement, that the Conscience is alwayes to be moderated and directed by Gods word: whereunto if it bee agreeable and consonant, yet it bindeth a man no more then it was before bound by the eternall word of God. And therefore such Conscience is alwayes to be followed and obeyed. But if it doe prescribe any thing, meere contrary vnto the same word, then it is to be corrected and amended. For if the least scruple remaine in the minde, whether a man doe according to the motion of his Conscience, or against it, he sinneth grieuously: For

in doing the one, a man sinneth agaynste Gods law, and in doing the other, thou also offendest. For although the dede in it selfe be good in Gods sight, yet man doth it doubtingly, whether it be good or no: which doubt and staggaring of the mind is offensiue & condemneth a man, Hereof the Apostle pronounceth him blessed that doth not cõdemn him selfe in that he alloweth. Ro. 14. In which sentence he telleth vs ꝙ we may not dee any thing, which leaueth behind it a doubt or remorse of Conscience, for hee that doubteth, and yet goeth through wyth the matter, doe most playnely contemne God.

Doubtfulnes of the conscience dangerous.

And moreouer, whiles that he doth a good thing, doubting within him selfe whether it be so or nay: he giueth iuste occasion for all men to iudge that he would also not sticke to doe mischife if occasion serue. So it commeth to passe that the thing which is not euell in it selfe, is yet by doubting, euel to him that doth it, and his own Conscience accusing him, will pronounce sentence agaynst him. For this cause it is rightly said, that if Reason erring and deceiued, doeth prescribe and appoynt any thing as Gods

heftes,

hestes, and yet not so in deede: that then if the Will doe neglect Reasons commaundement, it is as great an offece as if a man should withstand the commaundement of God.

And touching that other question whiche encombreth many men, whether we ought to follow our Conscience, or the magistrate commaunding thinges contrary: in which question if master Fox had at large put down that which hee briefly and finely touched and shadowed (as it were) in his preface, before his titles of common places: or if mayster Mullins would vouchsafe to commit that to writing which hee discoursed herein profoundly and learnedly at Paules Crosse: then I should not want any thing that might serue to the full dissolucion of this question, my opinion is thys. If the Prince or magistrate, doe commaund any thing repuguaunt to Gods Lawe, our Consciences, witnessing the same: then let vs remember that the Apostles and other the faythfull seruauntes of Christ, in the primatiue church would rather abide painfull imprisonment and sustaine most sorrowfull death, then in any one iotte obey

their

their wicked ordinances. The blessed martir and Bishop Policarpus aunswered the Romayne Proconsull: Wee are taught to obey princes and Potentates, in those thinges that be not contrary to sincere Religion. And Chrisostome sayd divinely to Gaynas: It is not lawfull for the Emperour being the defendour of true Godlines, to attempte any thing against the same. The Prince or other supreme Magistrate, is appeynted the keper of both the tables; but he may not proceede to decree any thing withoute the compasse of the Scripture. For Will worshippinges are not acceptable to God, because they are not agreeable to his eternall wil, neyther can they assure mens Conscience, that they are accepted of God. Wherefore such authority was not geuen to Moyses himselfe, that he might of himselfe deuise and ordeyn Religion, but God did expresly and perticulerly by name appeynt these thinges which he would haue proposed to his people to be kept of them. Neyther did he instruct Moyses in a moment, but taking him vp into the mountaine vnto him, by the space of fourty dayes: gaue him instructions, and afterward left any scruple or

Policarpus.

Chrisost.

God instructed Moyses by degrees.

doubt should remayne: he solemnely authorised his ministery by miracles and wonders in the eyes of all the Israelites. Neither had the Apostles power at their pleasure, to fashion and forme what Religion they would, but Christ firste taughte them by mouth, and afterwardes added sacraments of true Religion, and confirmed the same with signes and wonders: and finally gaue them commission to teach, and preach those thinges which they had heard, sæne, and receaued of him.

And so both the Testaments haue bene geuen, not by humaine, but by diuine tradition and power, confirmed moreouer with many mighty signes and wonders. For it is the pleasure of almighty God, that his ministers shall certeynly knowe his wil, which cannot bee, if men might in any respect inuent new religions. Which the Ethnicks in elder time knew right well, for Numa Pompilius setting vp a religion, perswaded the people of Rome, that in the night season, Aegeria appeared vnto him and reuealed such thinges as he instituted. He knewe right well that all opinions of religion are of no valure without the feare

Numa Pompilius.

of

of God: and therefore his meaning was that the people should receiue those things as deliuered not by man, but by instinction of the powers aboue. And therefore men should exceedingly swarue, if for the title of the office of a Magistrate, they accept al decrees and edicts of Religion: which in deede were nothing else then of a ecclesiastical, to make a seculer Pope. Whiles then we touch that the care of religion apperteineth to Magistrates, we meane not that they may at their pleasures dayly Coyne newe articles of the fayth: but that they shoulde follow the examples of Godly Princes, who alwayes in the reformation of Religion, had an especial eye to the word of god, the lantern and light vnto our pathes, and steps.

Nowe as concerning the princes temporall lawes. If they be made to the ende to laye vppon men opinion of religion, as though the obseruation of them were necessarie: then the conscience is burdened and snared contrary to godlynesse. For in matters of conscience we haue to doe only with God, and not with man. In some places the scripture seemeth to extende the same to men,

men, as when Paule sayth, he walked before God and man with a pure conscience, but that is bicause the fruites of a good conscience doth issue and flowe amongst good men: but properly as I sayde it appertayneth to God onely, neyther doth that place of saint Paule to the Romaines proue, that contrarie where a distinction ought to be obserued. For although euerye perticuler lawe reach not to the conscience, by the generall precept, yet obedience to the magistrate is commended, bicause they be of God: but the cyuill lawes of princes, eyther touching common profite, pleasure, vniformitie, and comelynesse, being eyther profitable or pleasant are to obserued & kept. For althoughe in their properties they be indifferēt: yet by meanes of authority they are almost equyualent with Gods lawes: and are not by anye meanes to be violated and broken, onlesse extreme necessitie vrge and as it were inferre violently to ỹ same. Necessitie in deede is pardoned, if wilfull arrogancie and malicious contempt of our superiours be absent. For in such cases, God respecteth the minde and not the fact: and where no wilfulnesse is, there is hys

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mercie moſt readie. And for as much as the lawe of God ſometime giueth place to neceſſitie: as when Dauid againſt the lawe did eate of the Shewbread, whome Chriſt defendeth: why ſhould not mannes ordynannces a great deale more doe the ſame, ſo that Malapartenelle and contumacy of our ſuperioures, and the offence of our brethren be farre from vs.

Two Cautyons the firſt agaynſt vayn confidēce in our own eyghteouſenelle.

It now reſteth only, that neither thoſe that haue good Conſcience doe truſt in their owen merites, neither yet hauing an euel Conſcience for his fylthy and abhominable life, ſhould fall into diſpaire: and ſo finally ronne into deſperation. That of ſaynt Auguſtine is diuinely ſpoken. Conſcience and Fame are two things, Conſcience is needeful to thy ſelfe, and Fame for thy neighbour: But if thou reſpect thy good name to the vttermoſt, & yet it nothing auaileth thee, be thou quiet in thy ſelfe, becauſe of a good Conſcience in the ſight of God.

And yet no man ought arrogātly to haue affiaunce in his good workes, and Phariſaically to pleaſe himſelf, and to contemne others: For the modeſty of ſinners diſpleaſing themſelues for their offences, is much

acceptable in Gods sight, then the workes and merites of those who in their own conceite accoumpt themselues iust. Which thing is clearely seene in the parable of the Pharisie and Publican, whereof the one puft vp with the opinion of his owne good workes (which affection encombreth euen good men ofte, vnlesse they dilligently take heede) displeaseth God, pleasing himselfe ouer much: not only a flatterer of himself, but contumelious to his neighboure. The other malecontent with himselfe, for hys guilts and offences, and beating his breste with most humble voyce, craued gods mercy: and so the more he was displeased with himselfe, the more he pleased God, according to that of Saynt Auguft. The iustice as it were of God, looked downe from heauen saying: let vs spare this man, because hee spared not himselfe, let vs forgiue him, because hee forgaue not himselfe, he conuerted himselfe to punish his sinne, let vs conuerte to deliuer him. Auguft. psa. 48.

This selfe loue and good opinion of oure selues ought to be eschewed, and it is beste for vs to thinck simply of our selues, and to say with Danyell. We haue offended, we haue

haue committed iniquity, we haue declined and gone astray from the commaundements. To thee O Lord belongeth glory, and Iustice, but to vs shame & confusion. For he glorifieth God that accounteth himselfe a sinner, and repenting, putteth his whole trust and confydence in Gods mercy: whereas proude Phariſes iudge eternall life to be the reward of their vertues, and good workes.

And what is sinfull man able to doe of himselfe: or if he be hable to doe any thing is not that to be attributed to Gods grace, by whose gift we are that we are: so that in all thinges, vnlesse we will be ouer impudent, we must needes graunt our exceeding great imbecility, and Gods infinite mercy. That trust therefore in our own merites, and vayne opinion of our righteousnesse, which will not suffer a man to bee humble and lowly: but stirreth him to pride and arrogancy, is by al meanes as a pestelence to be eschewed.

For God highly displeased therewith, taketh from man the right hande of his protection and suffereth vs to haue the rayhes at our will and pleasure: wherewith wee

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runne into ruine and destruction. And that I may leaue eternall accions, when we hapely may be blamles in the eyes of man; who dare once open his mouth to saye my heart is cleane, seeing that Iob in admiration crieth saying, Can that be cleane which is borne of a woman, not one, albeit hee liue but a day vpon the face of the earth? And S. Iohn, if we say we haue no sinne we deceaue our selues, and the truth is not in vs. But if we confesse our sinnes, he is faythful and iust to forgiue vs the same, and the bloud of Iesus Christ doth purge vs cleane from al iniquity. This sentence of that excelent Apostle and so welbeloued of God, taketh frō Hipocrits al vayne trust and confidence in their merites: and ministreth great consolation and vnspeakeable comfort, to afflicted consciēces, and such as bee vnquieted for their crimes, and offences, wherewithall they haue estraunged the countenance of their louing father from them.

S. Paule saith, This is our boasting euen the testimony of our conscience. But he sayeth again: He that reioiceth let him reioice in the lord, euery man may reioice then in his good deedes, but not without the Lord. And there-

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fore we must alwayes remember these thre Cautelles, first that we acknowledge all our goodnesse to come from God. Secondly, that we put our trust and confidence in God alone: Thirdly, that we reste and repose our selues wholy in God the fountaine and author of all goodnesse. These foundations being layd: then I say it is not only good but also nedeful, that we reioyce in our good dedes, not with vaūting Thraso, or the glorious hipocrite, but in the approbation and comfort of our good Conscience.

Against sorrow and dispayre of an afflicted Conscience

Neyther may the wounded Conscience, (which is as it were a taste of eternal death) dispaire of saluation, because of their heynous sinnes and offences: for they haue the merites and death of christ for their refuge and sanctuary. For oure heauenly father most tenderly and dearely louing vs, hath giuen his onely sonne to the death of the Crosse for vs, to obtein saluation, he hath giuen him vnto vs by whome he is pleased and reconciled to man, the remembraunce of our sins striken out, so that we certeinly perswade our self therof, and hauing this fayth doe wholy yeld our selues vnto him.

Hereof speaketh ỹ Apostle, if any man sin, we haue an aduocate with ỹ father, Iesus Christ the righteous, & he is the propitiatiõ of our sinnes, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world, and that saying is very cõfortable: What time soeuer a sinner doth repent him of his sinne, I will put all his wickednesse out of my remembrance. And again. As truely as I liue sayth the lord, I would not the death of a sinner, but that he should conuert and liue. These and such like sentences doe comfort vs against desperation, into the which Caine, Saule and Iudas, by diffidence fel, and with an oth God doth assure vs of his loue & mercy, which whosoeuer dispaireth of, he accuseth god of periury, being most heynous impiety, and denieth Christes sacrifyce to be auaileable to put away our sinnes. For our louing God doth principally request this at our hands, that we distrusting our selues, should trust and commit our selues only to him, whose loue and charity toward vs, hath appeared abundantly, that he hath geuen his only sonne for wicked and sinfull men for hys enemies, whereby he might receiue vs again, into his loue & gracious fauoure, with

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this fayth and confidence a sinful man may stay himself, and allure vnto him moste firme consolations and defences, when he wrastleth with the paungs and agonyes of sinne, death, and desperation: wherevnto often times a man is drawen, and tormented as it were of an hangman, by his own vnquiet Conscience, or by the malicious and guilefull temptatiõs, of his mortal and capitall enemy the Deuill.

And these thinges I thought good to commit to writing, touching the good and euell Conscience, wherein we see that as there is nothing more horrible and pernicious then the euel Conscience, doubting, mistrusting and despairing in all things: so there is nothing better, nor more comfortable then a good Conscience, which maketh a man liue euen a blessed life vpon earth, and procureth vnto him sincere and perfite pleasure. Seing then the commodity of a good Conscience is so great, and that no man can haue it, vnlesse he liue in his vocation, and doe his duety vprightly. It standeth euery man vpon to endeuour and bende all his power and strẽgth euen vnto the vtteremost, to satisfie and aunswere the same, which that I

The conclusion.

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may ſpeake briefely, is to abandon vice and embrace vertue, ſo ſhal we be partakers of ſuch an ineſtimable ioy and treaſure. So ſhall no good man deuiſe or practiſe any fraude or guyle: he ſhall not offer any iniury to his neighbour, and ſo to conclude ſhal vice be baniſhed, and vertues, as Religion, piety, Iuſtice, peace, concord, and ſuch other like, ſhal ſpring and flouriſh againe. God the author and giuer of all good giftes graunt vs al this excellent treaſure, that in all our actions we may weigh and conſider our Conſcience, being a dayly and domeſtical Iudge, wherby we ſhalbe ſtayed from committing thoſe thinges whiche offend his high maieſtie: that ſo liuing holyly and ſincerely in this world, we may in the other world, come to perfite bliſſe and immortalitie.

FINIS.